

Liberty



OCT. 23, 1943

10c

BOOK: MALTA STORY
A great war story
of love and heroism

ELMER DAVIS
AND THE NEWS

Signed

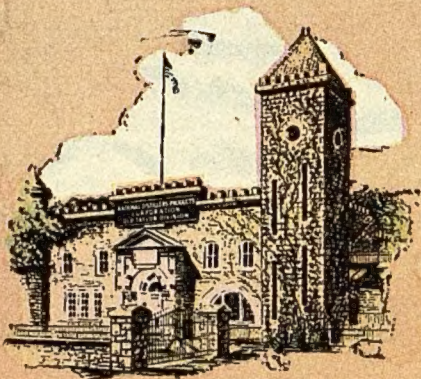
with the proudest signature in
whiskeydom

Sealed

with the green stamp that stands
for the strictest whiskey standards
in the world

*and
Delicious*

with the fine rich flavor
of Kentucky straight
bourbon whiskey at its
glorious best



Within the ivy-covered walls of this
distillery no whiskey other than
Old Taylor has ever been made.



The Old Taylor Distillery
Co. is 100% engaged in pro-
duction of alcohol for war
purposes.

This whiskey is 4 years old.
It was made before America
entered the war.

Wartime records like this show the **DIFFERENCE** in **TIRE QUALITY**



FOR many years we Goodyear dealers have sold the most tires — because of Goodyear's reputation for higher quality.

But today my customers tell me they never realized just how much *better* Goodyears are, until war made it necessary to squeeze out every possible mile.

In fact, many are still riding on prewar Goodyears that have already traveled a lot more miles than most folks ever dream of getting.

Take the pair of Goodyears pictured here, belonging to Mr. Charles T. Shelby, 316 West Sawyer, Decatur, Illinois. They've now run 55,255 miles — and they should be good for many months' more service, with a Goodyear Extra-Mileage Recap job.

There are many cases like this of Goodyear tires carrying on today with 40,000 to 50,000 miles behind them — performance records that evidence the greater value built into Goodyears.

Synthetic Rubber Tires

If you're eligible to buy the new syn-

A New Thrill in Radio

GOODYEAR "SALUTE TO YOUTH"

with Raymond Paige and
his Young Americans, Nadine Conner
NBC TUESDAY NIGHTS
See local paper for time



GOODYEAR
THE GREATEST NAME IN RUBBER

LifeGuard — T.M. The Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company

FROM OUR GALLERY OF GOODYEAR VETERANS



STILL RUNNING AT 55,255 MILES!

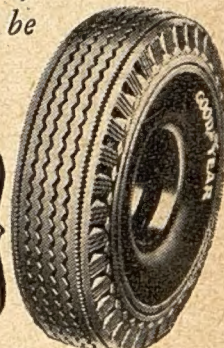
When photographed on May 3, 1943, Mr. Shelby's tires looked like this after going 55,255 miles. He writes: "I expect to receive between 65,000 and 70,000 miles from this set of Goodyears, considering the amount of tread left."

thetic rubber tires, now being produced in limited quantity for "B" and "C" class drivers, get the best synthetic rubber tires that can be made. Get Goodyears — the world's first-choice tires for 28 years.

But remember, the tire shortage is still exceedingly critical. Before asking

for new tires, get all the miles in your present Goodyears — by regular inspections, by observing wartime driving rules, and by installing Life-Guards to avoid puncture damages. See how much longer Goodyears last, and you'll say like thousands: "*As soon as I can get new tires again, you can bet they will be Goodyears!*"

The New
GOODYEAR
SYNTHETIC RUBBER
TIRE for "B" and
"C" drivers



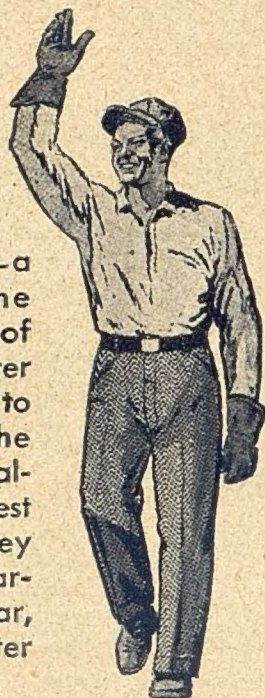
RAILROAD MEN

SWEAR by the WEAR of

Carhartt

Master Cloth Overalls

● From gandy dancer to locomotive engineer, railroad men the country over have been buying Carhartt work clothes for more than fifty years—a great tribute to the better wear and fit of these sanforized Master Cloth overalls—and to the traditions of the Carhartt family for always building the best work garments money can buy. Ask for Carhartt's and get top wear, better fit and greater working comfort.



THE CARHARTT OVERALL COMPANY
Detroit, Michigan

On sale at your local dealer's.

Carhartt

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50 Years a Friend to Organized Labor

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LIBERTY

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Free for Asthma

If you suffer with attacks of Asthma so terrible you choke and gasp for breath, if restful sleep is impossible because of the struggle to breathe, if you feel the disease is slowly wearing your life away, don't fail to send at once to the Frontier Asthma Co. for a free trial of a remarkable method. No matter where you live or whether you have any faith in any remedy under the Sun, send for this free trial. If you have suffered a lifetime and tried everything you could learn of without relief; even if you are utterly discouraged, do not abandon hope but send today for this free trial. It will cost you nothing. Address Frontier Asthma Co. 559-K Frontier Bldg. 462 Niagara St., Buffalo, N. Y.

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LEE WAGNER, CIRCULATION MANAGER

LIBERTY

Free—This New, **PULSE-POUNDING** **MYSTERY!**

To New Members of the Detective Book Club

The Woman In Red

By **ANTHONY GILBERT**

Why should the Woman in Red plan such an "accident" to happen to Julia Ross? Meek and penniless, without a friend or enemy in the world, how could Julia be more important dead than alive?



WHAT happened to Julia Ross could happen to anybody . . . to YOU! Only twenty-four hours earlier, she had been just a penniless, unemployed Nobody—without a friend or enemy to her name! Now, suddenly and without warning, she had been made the victim of an inhuman plot to destroy her identity, her sanity . . . even her life! **AND YET SHE DIDN'T KNOW WHY!**

WHY? WHY had the sinister "woman in red" been so pleased at hiring a personal secretary who had no friends, no relatives—*whom no one would miss if she should suddenly vanish?* And **WHY** had she been whisked away from London on the first day of her new job? **WHY** had she been brought *here*—to this heavily shuttered house at the edge of a God-forsaken little village? *Why was "the woman in red" telling everyone that the girl locked in the upstairs room was her feeble-minded niece, Sheila Campbell?*

Julia knew she **WASN'T** Sheila Campbell. Even though they **CALLED** her by that name. Even though the identity card in her purse bore that name. Even though all her personal possessions were monogrammed "S.C."! And she *knew* she **WASN'T** insane—despite all those tapping noises and ghost voices. But if she didn't escape soon, she actually **WOULD** become—a half-wit named Sheila Campbell!

She had just one chance. If—

But read *The Woman In Red* for yourself, at our expense. You'll find your hands gripping your chair—your heart pounding like a trip-hammer—as you race down the home stretch of this terrific story!

The Woman In Red is brand new, just published. It's selling everywhere right now for \$2.00! But we want to give you a copy of it, **FREE**—to show you the kind of top-

notch mysteries you can get *every month* from the Detective Book Club.

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Each month this Club offers to its members an attractive triple volume containing **THREE** modern detective books—for the usual price of only **ONE!** And **EACH** of the three is a complete, full-length novel.

Do you realize that about 300 new detective books are published every year? You can't read them all. It's hard to find the best. But if a mystery is by an author like Agatha Christie, Erle Stanley Gardner, Rex Stout, Anthony Gilbert, Frank Gruber, or Frances and Richard Lockridge, it's sure to be good! All of these and many other famous writers have had their books selected by the Detective Book Club.

The selections of the club are **ALL** books that sell everywhere for \$2.00 each. Yet, as a member of the Club, you get three of them (a \$6.00 value) for only \$1.89! You do not have to take a triple volume a month—you may accept as few as four during the whole year and still save two-thirds the usual price on those you purchase.

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By accepting this **FREE** copy of *The Woman in Red* **NOW**, as a Charter Membership Gift from the Club, you will not be obliged to take every month's selection during the next 12 months. You may take as few as four during that time. You may cancel your membership whenever you wish. A description of the next month's selections will be sent you with each month's book, and you may reject in advance any volume you do not want.

You need send no money with the Reservation Coupon. **ASSURE** yourself of the privilege now being offered to Charter Members. To get this spine-chilling mystery hit, *The Woman in Red*, absolutely free, **AND** the current triple selection, address the coupon at once to:

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Please enroll me as a member and send me, **FREE**, **THE WOMAN IN RED**, by Anthony Gilbert. Also send me the current triple volume, containing three complete detective books.

This does not obligate me to take every monthly triple volume during the next 12 months. I may take as few as four during this period, if I so wish.

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CITY.....STATE.....



The new Breezewood Pipe



A native-born pipe
is the new hit among
pipe smokers—Breezewood!

Right from the heart of the Great Smoky Mountains comes America's great new gift to pipe-smoking enjoyment. It's Breezewood, cool and sweet to smoke, zephyr-light in weight. Leave it in your mouth, fatigue-free: free both hands for your work. No wonder it's the big hit with pipe-smokers everywhere. Go to your dealer's—ask for Breezewood, buy yourself a Breezewood pipe today!



No wonder they were astonished! They all guessed too high! Actually the astounding new Breezewood pipe weighs, on an average, less than 1 1/4 ounces.

Free your Hands for Other Tasks
The new Breezewood pipe is so light, it's pleasant to keep it in your mouth. Breezewood doesn't fatigue you when working, driving, or whenever your hands are busy.

Copy, 1943. The Breezewood Pipe Co., 630 Fifth Ave., N. Y.

★ VOX POP ★

"The Voice of the People"

A THIRTY-TWO DOLLAR JOKE.

TULSA, CALIF.—In September 4 Liberty there appeared a certain doctor-and-patient cartoon: "Tell me the worst, Doc. What's the bill?"

My husband sent it to his doctor. It so pleased him that he showed it to the patients waiting in his office and to other doctors in his building, and then sent



us a bill for \$32 marked "Paid in full" because of the clever picture we had sent him. We wish to thank Liberty for making this possible.—Mrs. C. W. Benedict.

Wish our medico had a sense of humor like that!

LOVE'S LABOR NOT LOST

SICILY—It's not the seraph peering at me from behind that lemon tree, or the way I'm hammocked between two almond trees, or the heat, or the manner in which Sicilians are passing with clusters of grapes within easy reach that makes me sit down and write a fan letter to an author through a magazine. But I thought you might like to know that a friend of mine, Sergeant Tony Zack, of Uniontown, Pennsylvania, received a letter from his girl that consisted of twelve single-spaced typewritten pages.

The letter was a copy of a Liberty story, Johnny Doesn't Live Here Any More, by Alice Means Reeve. (June 26 Liberty.)—Cpl. Samuel Fuller.

And we'll bet Sergeant Tony liked it just as much as his girl did, for it was a swell yarn.

A JUST PEEVE

DUNKIRK, N. Y.—I have four brothers in this war—one is missing in action—and I worry about them day and night. But I keep it to myself, and when I hear a lot of people complaining about a lack of gas or butter instead of pitching in and carrying their share of the burden, it makes me mad.—Mrs. M. Acuto.

A HAND FOR VOX POP

FLEET POST OFFICE, SAN FRANCISCO, CALIF.—Since coming overseas quite some time ago, I have had my folks send me regularly copies of Liberty as they were published. Vox Pop gives me a lot of laughs. I commend you on the

magazine in general, even in the face of some critics. Give my regards to Old Sarge—the old soldier gets us some of that new dope out here even before we get it officially.—J. F. Andrews, Jr., Sgt., U. S. M. C.

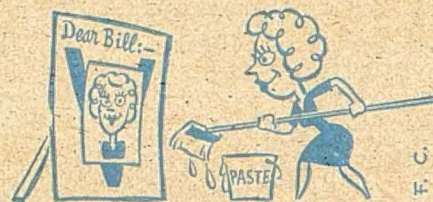
OH! WHAT A PUN!

LONG BEACH, CALIF.—It is strange indeed that we hear over the radio so many commentators, announcers, and other educated people so careless in their speech that they say "sekaterry" instead of "secretary" and "liberry" instead of "library." Why not dub the commentators "spuds"—common taters—eh?—George S. Treher.

SENDING BABY'S PHOTO

PORTLAND, ORE.—On page 40 of August 28 Liberty we find an error concerning the pasting of photographs to V-Mail forms.

The Postal Bulletin No. 18615, July 2, 1943, states: "The War Department further advises that photographs may not be pasted on a V-Mail form, but must



be transposed thereto without altering, treating, or sensitizing the form in any manner."—H. F. Honey.

We understand that the machine into which the V-mail sheets are inserted for photographing are so finely adjusted that pasting even the thinnest picture on them is impossible.

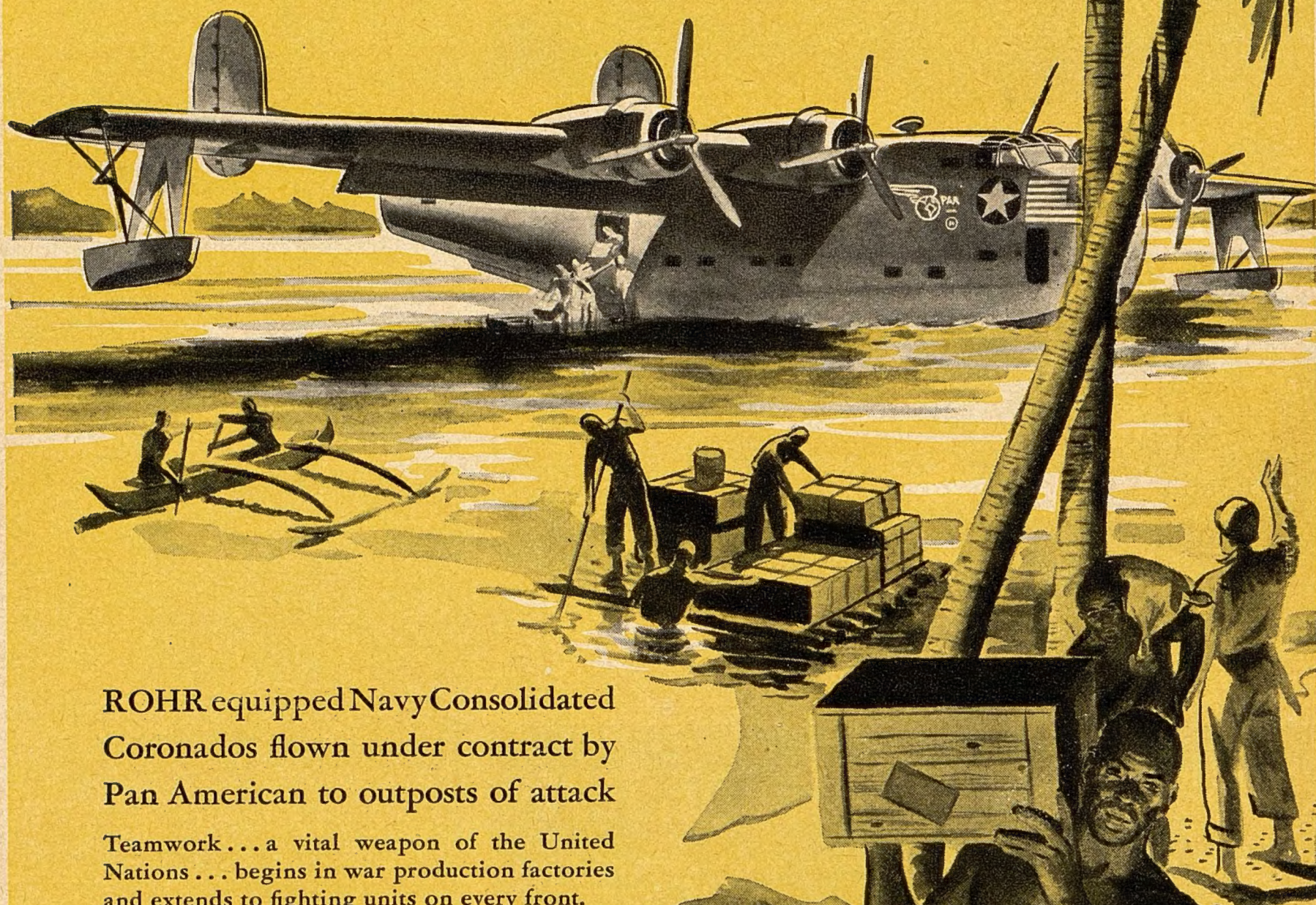
HITHER AND YON

SAN DIEGO, CALIF.—I think that our First Lady should ask herself, "Is this trip really necessary?" whenever she gets that yen to flit far and wide. And as for representing American women—that is being done by women in all branches of the services and those doing every type of work in our defense plants.—Margaret B. Shields.

FAMISHED FRANCE

BROOKLYN, N. Y.—As a new subscriber, I want to tell you how much I like Liberty and how touched I was by the article Let Them Wear Lace! by Paula LeCler (September 11 issue). I think it good for us to know how little we in the United States are suffering, compared with conquered nations like the French.—Rachel Hazan.

San Francisco to Salamaua



ROHR equipped Navy Consolidated Coronados flown under contract by Pan American to outposts of attack

Teamwork... a vital weapon of the United Nations... begins in war production factories and extends to fighting units on every front.

Teams of Rohr Production Fighters work around the clock preparing huge Consolidated Coronados for the next team... skilled flight crews of Pan American World Airways... on a mission of quick supply to far-flung forces of the Allies.

Teamwork is the dominant spirit of men and women on Rohr production lines... determined to help cut the time to Victory!

HELPING TO WRITE THE



STORY OF TOMORROW

ROHR
PARTS ☆ ASSEMBLIES

ROHR AIRCRAFT CORPORATION • CHULA VISTA, CALIFORNIA

AUTO-LITE SPARK PLUGS

IN SERVICE ON EVERY FRONT



"We'uns promised the blood bank a quart
... reckon Paw has any?"

GASOLINE DONORS CAN HELP, TOO!

Become a gasoline donor by giving your spark plugs a "Plug-Chek." Tests conducted by The American Automobile Association show Auto-Lite "Plug-Chek" Inspection Service can increase gas mileage as much as 12%!

As simple an operation as cleaning and regapping your

present plugs may do the trick. A proved inspection service, "Plug-Chek" is offered exclusively by Auto-Lite Spark Plug Dealers.

Stop for a "Plug-Chek" today—and if inspection shows new plugs should be installed, be sure to insist on Ignition Engineered Auto-Lites!

THE ELECTRIC AUTO-LITE COMPANY
TOLEDO, OHIO • Merchandising Division • SARNIA, ONT.



Color and condition tell if plugs are operating properly. Matching your plugs with those illustrated on the "Plug-Chek" is the first step in getting new life for "spark-weary" engines.



DESTINATION TOKYO

By Steve Fisher

The road to Tokyo might be a one-way street for Russel Quade, chosen for a secret mission that led straight into danger. A powerful novel of the submarine service, of the officers and men of the U. S. S. Copperfin, of Quade, an outsider, for whom there were no detours on the road to destiny, and of Betty, the girl he could not forget.

THE WILD FLIGHT OF NORWAY'S GOLD

By Webb Waldron

Sixty tons of Norwegian gold were in Oslo when the Nazi invasion force came over the horizon. How that gold was ultimately saved makes one of the really fabulous chapters of the war.

THEY CALL THEMSELVES FRIENDS—AND MEAN IT!

By Mona Gardner

The Quakers recognize no Sabbath, have no written creed, and stick to no ritual. The fascinating story of a religion without a church.

MEET HAPPY DUNNAVAN

By Helen Sanwick

Happy is too young to be thinking of marriage—but she taught an "old man" approaching forty a few things about women.

STAR-SPANGLED SOPRANO

By Ted Shane

Lucy Monroe has sung The Star-Spangled Banner more than 2,200 times. Here is the unusual story of Francis Scott Key's most effective song plugger.

GO WEST AGAIN, YOUNG MAN!

By Governor Arthur B. Langlie

The chief executive of the State of Washington predicts that, after this war, the Oregon Trail will stretch across the Pacific to a new Klondike in the Orient.

A MAN OF MALICE LANDING

By Dorothy James Roberts

Liberty's Book Condensation

The story of a small-town boy who hit the big time—but who didn't discover the meaning of life and love until he came home again.

Rubbing shoulders
in these days of hard work and common
purposes makes us know each other better.
Things we've had to give up are more than
balanced by our gains — by the pleasure we
get from seeing our neighbors more — or
having Cousin Charley's family in for supper. *These are true and solid values*
—made richer, happier still with a glass of friendly Schlitz... brewed with
just the *kiss* of the hops, none of the bitterness.



*Years of
No bitterness*

Just the KISS of the hops...



—all of the delicate hop flavor—none of the
bitterness. Once you taste that famous flavor found
only in Schlitz, you'll never go back to a bitter brew.
Since 1849, America's most distinguished beer.

In 12-oz. bottles and Quart Guest Bottles. On tap, too!

Copyright 1943, Jos. Schlitz Brewing Co., Milwaukee, Wis.

THE BEER THAT MADE MILWAUKEE FAMOUS

ON THE BEAM

BY WAYNE PARRISH

Stratosphere Problem

Ever hear of the tropopause? Probably not, but the tropopause is being given a lot of study by aeronautical engineers because it must be conquered before stratosphere flying can become commonplace. Described by Frank D. Klein of the Standard Oil Company of New Jersey in the *SAE Journal*, published by the Society of Automotive Engineers, the tropopause is a shallow, tempestuous zone, six to ten miles above the earth, marking the lower level of the stratosphere.

Planes that travel the calm and comfortable stratosphere must be prepared to navigate the tropopause, a storm zone of violently contradictory weather and stratospheric conditions which are pretty rough on planes, crews, fuels, and lubricants. An airplane taking off at ground temperatures as high as 110 degrees Fahrenheit will encounter tropopause temperatures of 125 degrees below zero 56,000 feet over the equator and of 120 degrees below zero 53,000 feet above Florida. Strangely enough, the tropopause is warmer over the earth's colder regions—101 degrees below zero above Alaska, only 50 degrees below over the North Pole.

Because of these abrupt changes in air temperatures and pressures, Mr. Klein says, aviation lubricants must be given increased stability, fuels a higher octane range and greater resistance to vapor lock. Greases must resist both heat and cold. The scientists have a long row to hoe before you'll be traveling easily in the *real* stratosphere.

German Air Power

Germany's much-vaunted Luftwaffe began to disintegrate rapidly in July and August for several notable reasons. One was the destruction of aircraft plants in Germany. Another was the singling out for special attention by our A. A. F. of large maintenance and overhaul bases in occupied countries. But just as important was another factor: the Nazis were forced into a fluid defense.

Up until this past summer the Germans had maintained a network of fixed bases for interception of bombers from England. But when

the R. A. F. and the A. A. F. began to shuttle between England and Africa, and to spread their targets over a wider area, the fixed interceptor bases no longer worked. The Allies deliberately jumbled their raids to such an extent that the Germans were forced to move their interceptors from one base to another. All this requires more man-hours, more maintenance problems—and more fuel.

What happened in August was what the Allies hoped for—namely, that the Germans shifted their defenses so many times that they were not only far less efficient but much more vulnerable. The Germans are sticklers for procedures, patterns, and order. The fluid defense was out of their line. August, 1943, can be chalked up as the month when the once proud and great Luftwaffe began its swift spiral of disintegration.

Rosy Future

One of our most noted optimists in aviation is the Administrator of Civil Aeronautics, Charles I. Stanton, who was one of the first air-mail pilots in 1918, when the Army started an experimental service between Washington and New York. Mr. Stanton believes there will be 300,000 civil, commercial, and military airplanes in active service in the United States three years after the war, and 500,000 by 1950.

This would be quite an increase, for there were only 25,000 licensed civil aircraft in the country at the end of 1941. Some of the private-plane manufacturers are likewise optimistic. But there are many in the industry who believe Mr. Stanton may be looking through glasses that are too rose-colored, although every one in aviation hopes he's right. If

there are a half million airplanes in use by 1950, there will have to be a great expansion of ground facilities, such as landing fields. The federal airways system has expanded to such an extent that it can handle much more traffic, but some of the old-timers whistle when any one starts talking about a half million airplanes.

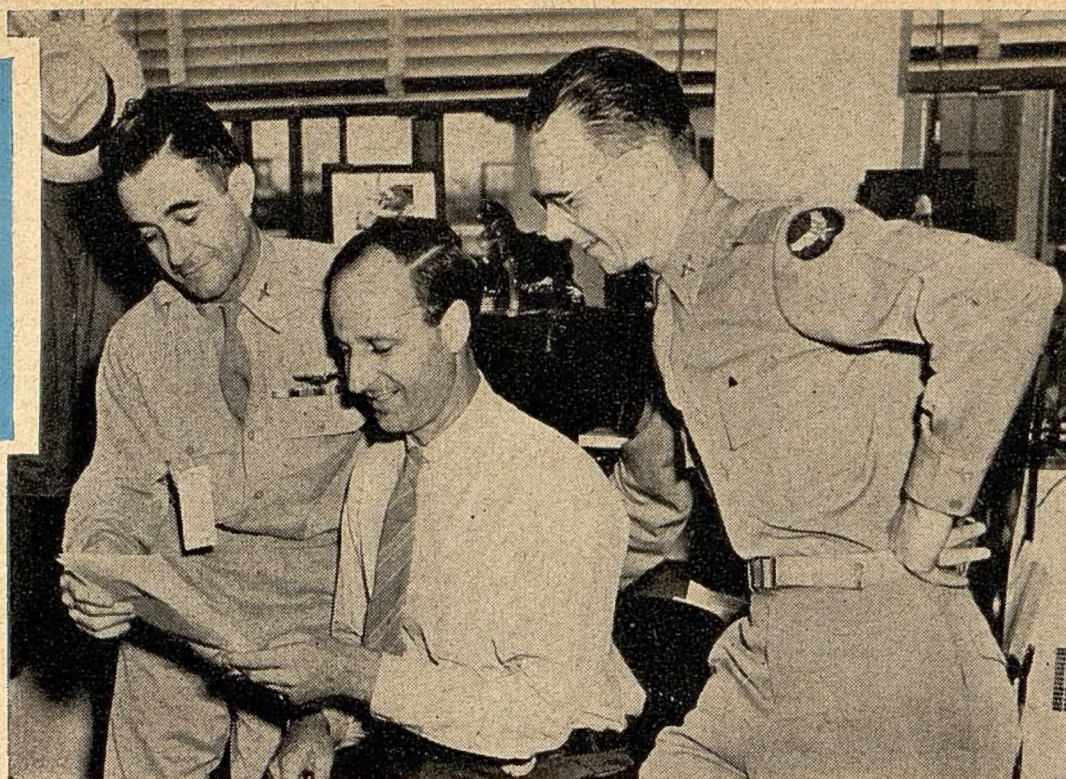
Long-Distance Alarm

Here's a real fire-alarm system. As a United Air Lines pilot was flying over the Indiana countryside on a recent night, he noticed a large fire on a farm. He radioed the Civil Aeronautics Administration post at the Rome City Airport, who relayed the information to local police, who in turn relayed it to Columbia City via state police radio. Although a silo, two straw stacks, and a tool shed were destroyed, firemen arrived in time to save the house and barn.

Like Rabbits

Here are some illuminating statistics showing the vast increase in training by our Army Air Forces. In the entire nineteen years prior to 1941 the total number of pilots trained was less than 7,000. It's on the unbelievable side, but true. Today the rate of pilot production is about 75,000 a year! And this figure does not include glider, liaison, observation, and women pilots, nor does it include the British, Dutch, Canadian, and Chinese pilots being trained.

For ground crews the figures are just as exciting. In the twenty-year period prior to July 1, 1941, there were less than 15,000 graduates from the Air Corps technical training schools. During the succeeding twenty-one months over 503,000 men completed prescribed courses.



Expression of faith. Carl Friedlander (seated) holds a request for the Aeronca South African franchise—from a soldier in a German prison camp!

"Don't be asleep to danger!"-says HI to HATT

Them plans you're spillin' in your sleep
might reach the Risin' Sun!

Well, shut my mouth! We shouldn't peep
until our job is done!



WAR AIN'T A DREAM!

This ain't no time for forty winks
an' talkin' in your slumber,
'Cause one of Hitler's prowlin' ginks
could easy get your number!
A patriot what's worth the name
will safeguard this here nation
By puttin' in a lot of work
an' cuttin' conversation!

(Signed) MR. HI AND MR. HATT



KESSLER'S

BLENDED WHISKEY

KESSLER'S PRIVATE BLEND. 55% Grain Neutral Spirits. 85 Proof. Julius Kessler Distilling Co., Incorporated, Lawrenceburg, Ind.

**One M-4 tank
uses as many
G-E lamps
as a small house!**



It's true! A General Sherman (M-4) tank uses 27 G-E lamp bulbs, about the number you'd find in the average home. Five of them are shown here. A full armored division uses 60,000



lamps . . . a year's supply for every home in Hackensack, N. J. The General Electric



research organization that developed these



and other G-E lamps used by the

armed forces is your assurance



that the G-E lamps you use are made to stay brighter longer

Key to tank lamps above: (1) G-E "all-glass" spot and signal lamp (2) Black-out lamp (3) Headlight lamp (4) Compass illuminator (5) Inspection lamp.

THE BEST INVESTMENT IN THE WORLD IS IN THIS COUNTRY'S FUTURE...BUY WAR BONDS

**G-E MAZDA LAMPS
GENERAL ELECTRIC**



Hear the General Electric radio programs: The "Hour of Charm" Sunday 10 p. m. EWT, NBC; "The World Today" news every weekday, 6:45 p. m. EWT, CBS.

ELMER DAVIS AND THE NEWS

BY RICHARD LAUTERBACH

Liberty

THE MAGAZINE OF
A FREE PEOPLE



Elmer is the champion of everyone's right to know what's going on. His trials and triumphs in getting information to us and a close-up of the man himself make an unusual and arresting article

ONE balmy evening in June, 1942, three men gathered in the White House study to consider an amalgamation plan for the government's sprawling, unorganized, much criticized war information services. The hardest problem was the selection of the right man to head the new organization. After a half dozen famous names had drawn mixed notices, one of the three pushed back in his chair, cleared his throat, and said, "How about that radio commentator?"

The speaker was Franklin D. Roosevelt. Two of his oldtime and favorite Brain Trusters, Judge Sam Rosenman and Harry Hopkins, looked at him dubiously.

"You mean Raymond Gram Swing?" asked Hopkins.

The President shook his head. "No," he said. "I mean the fellow with the funny voice. Elmer—Elmer something."

This is how Elmer Davis, the quiet, scholarly, white-haired Columbia Broadcasting System news com-

mentator, became involved, much against his will, in what was and, according to some observers, still is perhaps the worst mix-up in wartime Washington.

When the man "with the funny voice" descended on Washington in July, 1942, he was not unlike the Biblical character David in his own novel, *Giant Killer*, who went to fight the Philistines with little more than his integrity and a will to win. Davis reluctantly walked into the battle-scarred field of government information services via an office in Archibald MacLeish's Office of Facts and Figures. He closed the door to his office, fingered unhappily through the bewildering confusion of charts presented for his inspection, and, looking around the room, asked, "Could I have a typewriter?" A typewriter is such an important stimulant to Davis' thought processes that he has been known to halt in the middle of an important policy discussion, swing round to his trusty typewriter, pound out a couple of

paragraphs, then turn and say with evident satisfaction: "Here, this is what I mean. This is the way we ought to put it."

Then he tried to apply himself to the elaborate charts which showed all the information service's personnel and their duties. Quietly and as agreeably as he could, he said, "I can't understand charts." Undaunted, a bureaucrat then handed him a weighty report on what the old information groups had been set up to do. He pushed it away. "It's too much reading matter," he said.

Such actions on Davis' part gave rise to an impression that the new director was a cryptic lone wolf who would never get the hang of organizational routine. This impression grew stronger when he fidgeted during conferences and occasionally got up and walked out without explanation. Since moving into a spacious office on the third floor of the Social Security Building which has an imposing long conference table, he has
(Continued on page 55)

SHOULD OLD ACQUAINTANCE

Beware of mouse-meek men when they begin to roar like lions! Mr. Finch, weary of being pushed around, asserts himself in a unique way with startling results

THIS Mr. and Mrs. Finch lived in Chappaqua. They had a nice place there. Mr. Finch worked for a weekly magazine called the Trend, or some such name. Week-days he went into New York and

sat in a mahogany coop with his glasses on and studied maps and news dispatches, and on Thursday he dictated a military analysis of the week to his secretary and mailed it off to the printer. Because he was the Trend's military expert. And then on Saturday and Sunday he put his glasses away and spent the day shaking up cocktails at home.

But Mr. Finch wasn't the real boss anywhere, and so he wasn't happy. The editor of the Trend was a fat man named Briggs, who looked and acted like an enraged hippopotamus. He roared at Mr. Finch continually—partly to keep Mr. Finch's indignation up to the

proper editorial pitch. For the policy of the Trend was indignation. As long as you were sufficiently indignant, Mr. Briggs felt, it didn't matter who you were indignant against. And so Mr. Finch's pronouncements were always criticism of the strategy of one side or the other in past actions. He never had a chance to forecast future developments, because you can't be indignant about something that hasn't happened yet. It certainly limited his scope.

And then, too, Mr. Briggs rewrote all Mr. Finch's stuff so as to put more

Fran was the dark sleepy-eyed type that make blondes take husbands home.



BE FORGOT?

BY WALTER BROOKS

ILLUSTRATED BY PAT HOLBROOKE

indignation in it. Usually he put a lot of bad grammar in, too. It was kind of discouraging.

Home was no help either. Mrs. Finch just said, "Oh, what do you care, Fred, as long as you get your salary?" And she picked on Mr. Finch. He liked to have a good time, but in general he was meditative and liked to think about things. Mrs. Finch was more practical. You never caught her thinking. Not that you'd have wanted to specially, for she was the dark sleepy-eyed type that make blonde women take their husbands home early from parties.

Well, life went on for Mr. Finch, and although it was sort of a fizzle, he put his ears back and took it, and went on thinking. One Monday, coming home on the train, he was thinking about professors. Some people had brought two professors to his house the day before. One was in the mathematical line, and the other occupied the chair of Applied Nonsense at Yale. At least that was what it had sounded like when they had been introduced, and his conduct certainly bore it out. The liquor-consumption curve for the Finch home went up sharply. And it set Mr. Finch wondering why professors were popularly pictured as absent-minded old men. True, these professors had been absent-minded. The mathematician had been continually reaching for other people's full glasses, and the Yale man had been found sleeping like a child on the back porch that morning. But in all other respects the popular concept was way off.

So now Mr. Finch thought about why were professors absent-minded. Certainly not because they were dumb. Maybe their absent-mindedness was deliberate. A matter of policy. He thought about that and then suddenly said, "Cripes!"

A Mr. Whiddick, who was sitting beside him, said, "What's the matter, Fred? Forget something?"

"Forget something!" said Mr. Finch. "Ha, that's a good one! No," he said, "I didn't forget anything. But I'm going to."

And Mr. Whiddick stared at him, and then went back to his paper.

WELL, that evening the Tidleys were coming to dinner. They had just moved to Chappaqua. Mr. Tidley was an old suitor of Mrs. Finch's, and neither his own marriage nor hers disturbed him in the continuance of this role. His technique was a little crude, including open avowal of his intentions, much kidding of Mr. Finch, and a lot of good gross flattery. He was also a free squeezer. Mrs. Tidley and Mrs. Finch both thought he was a scream. But to Mr. Finch he was just a dull ache.

When the Tidleys drove in, Mr. Finch was sitting on the porch. They waved and shouted, and he waved back and got up and went in the house. When the bell rang he went to the door.

"Ha, Finch!" said Mr. Tidley. "Still in good health, I'm sorry to see."

"I beg pardon," said Mr. Finch, peering. "I don't think I have had the pleasure—"

"It's the Tidleys, Mr. Finch," said Mrs. Tidley. "We've come to dinner."

"Oh, h'm—yes, of course," said Mr. Finch vaguely, and went to the foot of the stairs and yelled, "Hey, Fran, did you invite some people named Tidley to dinner?"

And Mrs. Finch called back, "Sure! I told you they were coming."

So Mr. Finch turned to his guests and said, "I'm sorry. I must have forgotten. Won't you sit down?" And then he looked at them abstractedly and wandered back to the porch.

"Well, upon my word!" said Mrs. Tidley. "He acts as if he'd never seen us before. Do you suppose he's kidding us?"

"Bah!" said Mr. Tidley. "He wouldn't know how!"

And then Mrs. Finch came down and said, "Hello, Tid. Hello, Ethel. Where's Fred?" So they told her, and she went and bawled Mr. Finch out. Then he apologized, and they went in to dinner right away because he had forgotten to shake up cock-tails.

DURING dinner it was plain that he didn't remember who the Tidleys were, and when Mr. Tidley's plate was brought up to him for more chicken he gave him the neck.

Mrs. Finch said, "Hey, Fred, what are you doing?"

He looked embarrassed, and said, "Oh, I'm sorry; I thought it was for Peter's dinner." Peter was their dog.

After dinner they played contract, and Mr. Finch lost quite a lot of tricks through forgetting what was trumps, and so on, but he gained a lot more by asking the right kind of question. He would say, "I suppose with the ace, queen, and three others, I ought to go to three, hadn't I?" And once, when his wife had gone pretty high in spades, he looked at his cards and said, "I never saw just this design on the ace of spades before," and they made a grand slam.

Everybody was pretty irritated, but he was so apologetic about it there wasn't anything they could do. But finally Mr. Tidley got mad. He slapped down the jack of trumps on a trick, and was starting to pick it up when Mr. Finch smacked his hand down hard on it. He hurt Mr.

Tidley's thumb, and Mr. Tidley said, "Hey, what's the idea?"

"It's mine," said Mr. Finch.

"The hell it is," said Mr. Tidley. "It's the jack of trumps."

"Oh, gosh," said Mr. Finch, "I'm sorry. I thought you were playing slapjack."

So they stopped playing, and then Mr. Tidley wanted Mrs. Finch to go out and listen for owls. But Mrs. Tidley got him on one side, and said, "Look, darling—I'm not going to be left alone with a lunatic."

So the Tidleys went home.

MRS. FINCH started to give Mr. Finch a piece of her mind. Mr. Finch got into bed quickly and closed his eyes and breathed very deep and peaceful. But Mrs. Finch came over and shook him.

"See here, Fred Finch!" she said.

"What? What?" said Mr. Finch, starting up. "Oh, sorry, Olive darling. I must have dropped off."

"Olive!" shouted Mrs. Finch. "What do you mean calling me Olive?"

And Mr. Finch said, "Oh, it's—well, it's just a name."

"Indeed?" said Mrs. Finch. "Something you read in a book, I suppose?"

"Gosh, I don't know," said Mr. Finch. "It just came to me—just welled up out of my subconscious."

"I guess it wouldn't well up so easily if it wasn't pretty important to you," said Mrs. Finch.

"Well, that's a moot question among the psychologists," said Mr. Finch. "Maybe it was the olives we had for dinner."

"Arrrrrrh!" said Mrs. Finch, and had hysterics.

Well, it began to look as if the absent-minded professors really had something, so Mr. Finch turned over and went to sleep.

In the morning Mrs. Finch started in all over again, but he had forgotten what she was mad at, and it had to be explained to him. And in the middle of it he called her Goldie, and she was in a terrible state.

Mr. Briggs didn't come into the office that day, but he sent in a batch of Mr. Finch's proofs, revised and all scribbled over with rewriting. Mr. Finch tossed them away and mailed the printer copies as he had originally written them.

By and by Mr. Briggs called up and said, "Finch, I think we should have a survey of the whole African campaign in this issue. About three columns. But don't be namby-pamby. Be biting. Be bitter."

So Mr. Finch wrote it, and it was indeed biting and bitter, only the bitterness was against those who criticized the Allied strategy, and not against the generals. And Mr. Finch also put in his own predic-

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ATLANTIC CONVOY

BY MORRIS MARKEY



BY midnight two or three of us got a little bored with the monotony of hunting for him. We knew he was down there, all right. We had made a very strong contact with him on the sound detector just a little after darkness set in, and the way in which we had lost that contact made us feel positive that he had not been able to slip away. No; he was somewhere within a five-mile radius, perhaps 400 or even possibly 600 feet below the surface—lying as still as he could, using his batteries only a moment or two at a time to control his trim, to keep him from floating up toward the surface or fading down to dangerous levels.

We knew fairly well what he looked like down there: his whole crew, in greasy dungarees and sneakers, packed together, and the air beginning to get bad; his commanding officer hunched over his own detector and tracing us as we moved above him, getting hopeful as our sweeps took us off toward the horizon, then losing hope as we sounded loud, coming back toward him again.

He would not come up for the mere sake of joining battle with us. We knew that. The best submarine they are making now is not a fair match for one of our destroyers if the destroyer is equipped with all the new stuff and if it is well commanded. We had the equipment. Our captain had already won the Navy Cross for extraordinary gallantry and seamanship at Safi. And furthermore we were not one destroyer but two, sent back from the convoy late that afternoon when the detectors first showed that he was in the neighborhood, now sharing that long slow hunt just about halfway across the Atlantic.

No, he certainly would not come up just for the fight. But there were some other things that could bring him up.

First of all, he might surface and take his chances with us for the sake of two minutes on his radio. He knew our convoy was very big and was carrying critical freight. He would give a great deal to spread news of it, its size and location and course and speed, to his brothers lurking about the sea, and to Admiral Dönitz, back at the L'Orient base. That would get him something very special in the line of Iron Crosses.

Then again, he would certainly be driven up eventually to suck in a gasp of air. And sooner or later he would have to surface in order to charge his batteries.

In any case, whatever brought him up, whether bravery or necessity, the first sign of his decision would probably be half a dozen torpedoes swimming through the black water. Three of them for us, say, and three for our companion over yonder about 4,000 yards away, invisible in the darkness, searching and searching precisely as we were doing.

Anyway, that was the way we thought about it, knowing that the

main idea was to keep him down so he couldn't use his radio.

Certain devices which we had gave our senses an acuteness far more than human. If he came within any reasonable range of us, submerged beneath the sea or on the surface of it, those devices would tell us of him—his presence and his location—the sound detector giving us that indescribable "ping," very loud and,

Come along with Liberty's correspondent on a U-boat hunt in mid-Atlantic and you'll see why the subs are down — probably to stay. The first of two exciting installments



The author, Morris Markey, somewhere in mid-ocean.

curiously, very musical, like the plucking of the A string on a violin.

Bearing such things in mind, you may perhaps understand why some of us got a little bored with peering out over the invisible sea and listening for sounds which were not there. You can't worry persistently about a torpedo, as you can, say, about a note due at the bank.

Unlike the others, the doctor and I had no duties to keep us on the bridge, and so we went below to the wardroom. He wanted to talk about the new baby his wife was expecting just about now, back in Gloversville, New York. And I wanted to talk about the dislocated shoulder I had helped him reduce the night before. (A fireman second class named Stuart had overestimated his strength at the end of a long-handled wrench in the No. 1 fireroom.) So presently we yawned a couple of times and decided to turn in.

Pajamas were unneeded equipment on our destroyer. You slept in full kit, loosening your collar button if you remembered it, and generally

kicking your shoes off sometime during the night. So I did not need to worry about dressing when the loud-speaker yanked me out of a sound sleep and stood me up in the pitch-darkness reaching for my eyeglasses.

Daytime and nighttime, you hear the loud-speaker rather often on a destroyer. You get so you don't pay any attention to the words when the boatswain's pipe shrills and a voice calls, "Change the watch!" But this time there were seven or eight short blasts from a whistle. And then a quiet, not very interested voice said:

"All hands man your battle stations."

In a moment it came again, with a slight variation which is knifed into my memory:

"Now all hands man your battle stations."

This did not mean that all hands had to be flagged out of sleep, as I was. We were standing at Condition Two, which meant that half the hands were already at their posts. My own post was topside, on the bridge, because the captain was a courteous gentleman who had told me, "If anything should happen to happen, I know you'd want to be in the best place to see it all."

It was exactly three o'clock in the morning.

I moved amid a peremptory noise of running feet and of men growling savage blasphemies as their heads banged against stanchions and projections and iron fittings in the darkness. As I fled upward, some were moving downward, racing toward ammunition rooms and handling stations far below the water level, where they would stand beneath hatches solidly dogged down, surrounded by tons of stacked explosives.

But before I could climb the two flights to the bridge the ship was quiet again, every man of nearly 300 men at his post and listening for orders.

A NEWLY risen full moon hung a few degrees above the horizon straight ahead, illuminating a brilliant roadway down which we crept, and casting into relief a dozen shadowy figures on the bridge.

The sound detector gave us its "ping" with impersonal regularity.

The captain picked up a telephone. That opened the short-range voice circuit with our companion destroyer—the ship-to-ship communication, new in this war and extremely valuable in battle. It is called the TBS. The captain's voice spoke (and I must substitute code names here):

"Corona to Bison. Tallyho. Target bears 088 from us, range 3,000 yards."

And through the small loud-speaker on our own bridge came Bison's code word indicating he understood: "Bison to Corona. Roger."

At that instant, as in some fabulous dream, it happened. Far down that roadway leading to the moon there

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Sammy Kaye leads and the boys make with the horns. The sale of their recordings comes close to the million mark.

SWING IS HERE TO SWAY

BY JESSYCA RUSSELL

PHOTOS BY ROY PINNEY

FROM the first wail of Sammy Kaye's clarinet to the last sigh of his musical signature, listeners form a swaying wall around the bandstand, even the jivesters lulling themselves to a slow wriggle instead of a hep bounce.

Kaye is a triple-threat music man. First, he's a band leader; second, a music publisher; third, a platter-maker. His band is rated highly for either swing or sweet music. His two music-publishing firms have snagged first place on the hit parade again and again with such tunes as Daddy, Until Tomorrow, and Remember Pearl Harbor. His recordings often approach the million-sale mark.

Kaye never meant to be a musician. It was really his mother's fault. When, after three girls, she had a son, she knew of course he could not be other than talented. Young Sammy was made to study not only the violin but also the banjo and the guitar. As is usually the case, the instrument he

The cats may think him corny, but the corn is green—long green! The fabulous story of Sammy Kaye, who plays a dreamy licorice stick

became famous for, the clarinet, he picked up later by himself. Meanwhile, in his high-school days he was more interested in athletics than in music. In between lessons at school and at home, and when not working on his news route or elsewhere, he could be found on the athletic field.

This brought dividends, too. He won a four-year scholarship to Ohio University, where he majored in mathematics, with an eye to becoming a civil engineer. His musical training didn't go to waste, however.

He formed a five-piece band to play at campus dances and local functions—and made the pleasant discovery that playing music for money is a lot more fun than playing it because you have to.

Sammy's shrewdness in business matters developed apace. When he entered college, there was a campus dancing spot known as Varsity Inn. During his freshman year it was taken over by a new owner who transformed it into a miniature golf course. This did not at all suit the preference of the student body for evening entertainment. They stayed away in droves. Sammy decided to do something about the situation. The owner handled insurance as well as real estate. Sammy commenced negotiations by cagily buying a small insurance policy from him, then somehow convinced him that leasing the property for a dance hall would automatically increase his insurance sales. In two dashes of a fountain

pen Sammy was leased the building, to do with as he would, at a ridiculously low figure.

Borrowing the money from his sister, Sammy opened the new Varsity Inn with merely a concrete floor to dance on and his five musicians as entertainment. Within two months he repaid his sister and had a flourishing business to keep him and his band in funds while in college. By graduation time neither athletics nor civil engineering looked as rosy as band leading, so he gave them up—though even today he totes a pretty good score on the golf links.

Few people know that the original Kaye combination was a jazz band, and that Sammy, against the advice of his well-wishers, changed it to the sweet style that has become his trade-mark. The band now boasts of sixteen instrumentalists, four vocalists, and three arrangers.

While touring in 1941, Sammy came across a tune from a then unknown song writer. Wasting no time in trying to interest a publisher in it, he published it himself. That's how Daddy was born, and that, too, is how Sammy became a music publisher—his small venture mushrooming into both the Republic and the World Music Companies.

TO look at Sammy Kaye's almost painfully thin physique, it isn't easy to believe he has the energy for the tough music business. But he works hard and studies hard, spurred on by an inborn yen to get ahead. A great deal of his good fortune came after meeting Ruth Elden while playing his first big-time engagement at the Statler Hotel in Cleveland, which is the home town of both. It took a year to win her. Now they have their own house there, to which Sammy goes as often as possible to see Ruth and their son Jackie—the apple of his eye. It was Ruth who encouraged Sammy to branch out into the many innovations that give the band its distinction today.

Chief among those innovations is the "So You Wanna Lead a Band" stunt. This consists of inviting four members of the audience, two male, two female, up to the bandstand to take turns at leading the boys. Each is given a souvenir baton, and they are told that the motion of their hands makes the music sweet or hot. The results are always hilarious, especially when a jitterbug girl keeps time with the lower part of her anatomy or a nervous novice slows down a first beat to a drawn-out moan that never seems to get started.

"So You Wanna Lead a Band" was created one night at Essex House, in New York, when a customer insisted that Sammy dance with his partner while *he* led the band. Being only human—and the girl very pretty—Sammy did dance, and the enthusiasm with which the crowd cheered his substitute's efforts reminded him that many other people had begged for the same privilege before. It wasn't long before the "So You

Wanna Lead a Band" routine was incorporated into the band's routine.

The first (and only) female vocalist with the band is pretty four-foot-ten Nancy Norman, whom Sammy hired two years ago after hearing a record of her singing at her high-school commencement exercises. Only eighteen, Nancy is probably the tiniest girl vocalist with a name band.

The core of the original Kaye orchestra remains intact, and includes some of the boys who started with Sammy at Ohio U. His habit of spotlighting his boys keeps them happy. One featured player is the drummer, Ernie Rudisill, whose comedy motions are responsible for many laughs in the band-leading stunt. Sammy also spotlights Billy Williams, who announces the Sunday Serenade programs, besides vocalizing in a baritone and playing sax; Arthur Wright, who sings tenor and thinks up special choral effects to accompany his solos; and Tommy Ryan, Sammy's original singer, who doubles on the guitar.

Sammy's chief arranger, Frank "Pump" Haendle, has been with him for six years. "Pump" has two helpers, and all three arrangers regard Sammy as easy to work with, though he is exacting and does demand originality of style. If he doesn't care for an arrangement, there's no scene

—he just tears it up and tells them to try again.

Sammy likes to consider himself a musical perfectionist. His own clarinet playing is mostly used for special effects, but he insists on the band being tone perfect. They usually rehearse until only a few minutes before air time.

Recognizing that young people are the mainstay of dance bands, Sammy encourages them through fan clubs and stage-door conclaves. Never snobbish, he is easy to see and talk to, gives out autographs unsparingly. But he is unable to remember names and covers up by calling every one "Dear boy" or "Dear girl."

RADIO was first responsible for his nation-wide popularity. Long before New York had ever seen Kaye in person he was a familiar name there among the top bands. So his first theatrical engagement in New York—at the Paramount Theater, mecca for top bands—was a record-breaker.

A slight, wistful figure on a bandstand, making no pretensions to glamour, but giving out with low throbbing notes that automatically awaken a protective instinct in the heart of each listener, Kaye has the same quality that attracts people to Frank Sinatra. And that ain't bad!

THE END.



Nancy Norman and Tommy Ryan sing with the band, and Tommy doubles on the guitar.

RECKONING DAY

The sergeant took a chance falling in love with a girl he'd never seen. When he met her in person it was a big surprise—and a bigger relief



BY ERNIE RYDBERG

ILLUSTRATED BY DICK LOOMIS

I MET him the first day he came to camp. He'd enlisted from some little place over in Arizona. His real name is Leroy. Only it don't fit him. It's like calling Hercules Percy. I guess when his folks named him, they had no idea he'd grow to be six foot two and weigh a hundred and ninety pounds.

Right away we started calling him Arizona. Maybe it was on account he kept talking about his home state. Maybe it was the sunshine in his hair and his blue eyes and swell grin. Or maybe it was because he was tough and strong—rugged, like the desert.

We're buddies from the start. Every Saturday when we'd have leave we'd go out on the highway and hitch a ride to San Diego. That is, we did until one Saturday. I'm waiting down at the La Jolla intersection when he comes running up all out of breath.

"I can't go," he puffs excitedly.

"What do you mean, you can't go?"

"I got a letter," he says. There's a funny look on his face. Knowing the symptoms, I figure it's a girl. Only I'm surprised. I never been able to get Arizona near a girl.

"So you got a letter," I grunt. "So what?"

"I got to answer it," says Arizona. "It's terribly important."

"O. K., O. K.," I say disgustedly. Just then a car pulls up, and I hop in and go on by myself. Only I don't have much fun all by myself.

When I get back to camp—about eight o'clock—I find Arizona in the recreation hall. He's sitting there, staring at a blank sheet of paper. The wastebasket is full of crumpled sheets. I saunter over to him.

"Need a little help?" I say.

"Hello, Pete," he says, and his face lights up like a July sun over Tucson. "Gosh, would you help?"

"Sure. What's it all about?"

Arizona fumbles through his pockets. He pulls out a frayed newspaper clipping. It says:

Tucson, Arizona: Belinda Honeybuss, 21, of Chuck Wagon was today crowned queen of the Rodeo. She cinched the title this morning by bulldogging a steer in twenty-nine seconds.

"The minute I saw that," broke in Arizona, "I knew she was the one. Just my age. An out-of-doors girl. A champion."

"So you wrote her a letter?" I scoffed.

"Yeah," says Arizona dreamily. "A week ago. Right after mom sent me the Tucson paper. Her answer came this noon. Here!"

"H'mmm," I say, reading it. "Not bad. 'And the sunsets—the smell of rain on the desert—the Joshua trees silhouetted against a full moon. Yes, I love all these things, too.'"

"Isn't she wonderful?" sighs Arizona.

"I don't know," I say sarcastically. "Especially on account of this postscript: 'I'm sorry I do not have a picture to send. It's been quite a while since I had one taken.' How do you know but she's seven feet tall and weighs three hundred pounds on the hoof?"

"Ever see anybody bulldog a steer?" snaps Arizona.

I grin. "O. K., O. K. You win. She's the athletic type. Let's get busy." And so we do. I do most of the writing, and, brother, do I lay it on! How homesick I am for Arizona. Also, how I'm practically the best rifle shot in Camp Callan. After quite an argument I get Arizona to sign it, "Always yours, Leroy."

Brother, did Arizona get it bad! Two or three letters every week. He got so he hardly ate, waiting for the mail. He let me read his letters, but he didn't need any more help answering them himself. I never would of thought he had it in him. Belinda's letters were nice, too, but kind of reserved.

"I don't care," beamed Arizona happily, "just so long as she keeps on writing. I like her that way. Just wait until my ten-day furlough comes through."

That was one Sunday afternoon Arizona told me that. We were alone in the recreation hall. He'd no more than said it when Lieutenant Hanks came over to us.

"Mrs. Dover of La Jolla is giving a party," he says. "Two men couldn't go. I want you two to substitute for them."

"Yes, sir," I said.

"Fine. There's a car out front. Be back by midnight."

"Boy!" I whistled. There's only one car outside—a red convertible. And the girls. Really something. We introduced ourselves. When Betty got out the front seat, I quick piled in. I prefer blondes, and what a blonde was Mildred! We hit it off right from the start. I keep worrying about Arizona. Betty is trying

to make conversation, but not doing so good. Finally, when we're about through the canyon, I hear her mention Phoenix.

"Are you from Arizona?" shouts Arizona.

"I sure am," says Betty proudly.

From then on I relax and devote my attention to duty—per Lieutenant Hanks.

Some party. Fried-chicken dinner. Dancing in the patio. Everybody having a swell time. Even Arizona—sitting in a corner with Betty and both talking like they'd known each other all their lives.

When we got back to camp Arizona was pretty quiet. I said nothing—just hoped. I guess we did all right with Mildred and Betty. They came out and picked us up the next two Sundays in a row. Swimming, tennis, eating. By the second Sunday I knew. Both Betty and Arizona had it bad.

"GOSH," moaned Arizona that night, "I don't know what I'm going to do."

"What do you mean?"

"I sure like Betty. Of course I like Belinda, too. I wonder, if we met, if I'd really like her. Her letters are kind of lukewarm. Gosh, I wish she'd send me her picture. Oh, gosh!"

"You might tell her you're being shipped out," I suggested.

Arizona shook his head. "No, I couldn't do that to Belinda. I'll write her."

It was the next week—after Arizona had written a letter that took five hours to compose—that he got his telegram. His face was deathly white when he handed it to me.

ARRIVING THREE P M SUNDAY NEXT LOVE BELINDA.

"Whew!" I whistled.

"Look how she signed it: 'Love.' She never did that before."

All week long Leroy was nearly crazy. He kept wondering if he should tell Betty. We both had to make excuses for Sunday. They were swell about it.

At three o'clock Sunday afternoon we're sitting in the recreation hall, waiting. I don't know who's more nervous, Arizona or me. He keeps going to the window and peering out. About three ten an orderly comes in.

"Sergeant Winfield," he says to Leroy, "the colonel wants to see



I guess we did all right with Mildred and Betty. They came and picked us up the next two Sundays.

you." And Leroy follows him out. He's got that last-mile look on his face. I smoke half a pack of cigarettes in the next thirty minutes. Which didn't help much. The orderly comes in again. He tells me to report at the colonel's cottage. Gosh, I'm scared! When I walk up the drive I can hardly believe my eyes. Arizona is all smiles. He gets up and says, "Pete, I want you to meet Belinda." I stare at her.

"It's all right," she chuckles and holds out her hand.

"How do you do?" I stammer.

"You didn't expect to meet an old gray-haired grandmother like me, did you, Pete?"

"No, ma'am," I gulp.

Belinda laughed softly. "It's all very simple. When I got Leroy's letter, I realized how lonesome he

was. I thought I might help by writing to him. I didn't actually tell him anything to mislead him. Of course I left out a few things, too. Come on, boys, have some tea. And there's lots of cake."

"Isn't she wonderful?" beams Arizona between bites.

"Yeah," I said, still confused. Something keeps bothering me. I can't figure it out. Finally it hits me.

"Hey," I yell, "that article! That bulldogging stuff that started it all."

Belinda picks up a newspaper from the coffee table. "Here it is," she says.

"Yeah. That's the one."

"See what it says at the top of the column—'Continued from page one, second section.'" And she folds back the paper for me.

"Holy smoke!" was all I could say. The column was headed:

THIRTY YEARS AGO TODAY

Belinda glanced at her watch.

"I don't want to rush you," she said, looking at Leroy, "but you'd better not keep your young ladies waiting."

"It's Belinda's idea, Pete," says Arizona. "She's going to dinner with the colonel. He's a friend of her husband, who's a colonel in North Africa. I phoned the girls."

"Good-by, boys. Good luck," says Belinda. "And, Leroy, don't forget your promise to write soon."

"I'll sure remember!" shouts Arizona, and, boy, did we run for it! We see a red convertible coming in the gate.

THE END



Alert for signs of danger, Secret Service men scrutinize the crowd as the President inspects the Boeing plant in Seattle.

THEY KEEP THE PRESIDENT SAFE

BY MERRIMAN SMITH

THE new ambassador moving up the White House reception line toward the President fumbled nervously in his trouser pocket for a cigarette lighter. A sharp-eyed young man standing near by moved quickly and tapped the ambassador on his pocket. He jerked out his hand without a word being said. The wife of a senator saw the incident.

"Goodness, do they think we're criminals?" she said, eying the young men who were scattered through the crowd.

These young men were too busy to explain that the Secret Service, following its policy of "no chances taken," does not allow guests to approach the President with hands in their pockets. The young men were looking not at the faces of the White House guests but at their pockets, their evening bags, and the handkerchiefs which some of the ladies carried in their hands.

Even a cabinet member like Secre-

tary of War Stimson, who visits the President once or twice a week and is well known to the entire White House staff, is checked in from the front gate to the door and from the receptionist's desk into the President's office. Every minute a visitor is in the White House the Secret Service knows exactly where he is and what he is doing. Walking through the spacious White House lobby outside Mr. Roosevelt's office, a first-time visitor probably does not notice the young men who survey him from leather chairs that line the room. They look, at first glance, more like visiting college boys than like the highly trained experts they are.

There is, of course, no actual "frisking" of White House visitors. The Secret Service agents can tell at a glance whether a person is carrying a concealed weapon. They look for suspicious bulges. And they look at all pockets impersonally, treat all visitors alike.

Not even Harry Hopkins is as close, literally, to the President as these men whose lives are dedicated to the task of preserving his safety. Every minute of the day and night there are several of them within a few feet of the President, regardless of whether he is in his White House bedroom, aboard a battleship, or in Casablanca with Prime Minister Winston Churchill.

Because of the war Mr. Roosevelt is more closely guarded today than ever any President was before in the history of the Secret Service. In fact, he is undoubtedly the most closely guarded individual in the free world.

Congress handed the responsibility of protecting the President and members of his family to the Secret Service shortly after the assassination of President McKinley. The first White House detail of the Secret Service, a unit of the Treasury Department, went to work under Theodore Roosevelt. Since then there has been no

such thing as a successful attempt on the life of a President, and this is largely due to the Secret Service policy of "no chances taken."

Literally every foot the President covers outside the White House is "cased" thoroughly in advance. Strangers who will be close to him are investigated one by one.

This goes for members of church congregations as well as luncheon guests.

On the rare occasions when he goes out to dine, every servant working in or near the building where the meal will be served is checked and double-checked by the Secret Service long before the date of the dinner. When any one with a criminal record is turned up, the host or the person in charge is told that the one in question must be removed from the scene or the President stays in the White House. To date the Secret Service has had no argument on this point.

At a Washington hotel where the President was to dine a few years ago, the agents did find among the employees nearly fifty aliens and some with criminal records.

IF there is to be entertainment during the evening, the names of the performers must be submitted to the Secret Service well in advance. Regardless of their fame, they are investigated.

Mr. Roosevelt has had time to accept extremely few outside invitations recently. He still goes to church several times a year, however, and regardless of how many times he has been in a particular church, the Secret Service makes an inch-by-inch check of the building and gets

from the pastor a list of the congregation members who will attend the service.

On New Year's Day, 1942, when the President and Winston Churchill went to Christ Church at Alexandria, Virginia, to worship in the pew once

**The most valuable life
in the U. S. is guarded
by trigger-quick super-
men who trust no one
within reaching dis-
tance of the President.**

occupied by George Washington, members of the congregation permitted to attend the service were not notified until a few hours before the two walked into the little red brick building. The rector had prepared a list of the parishioners whom he wanted to attend, selected on the basis of past attendance.

The Secret Service made its customary check and found no suspicious characters. Advance word of the service was withheld, however, until shortly before dawn on New Year's morning. Then a messenger from the church rode through the streets of Alexandria, knocking on the selected parishioners' doors. Each of them was handed a card of admission to his own church. The card made no mention of the President or Churchill, but the messenger warned,

"You'll certainly regret it if you don't come this morning." Most of them were in their pews at ten o'clock, gasping in amazement when Mr. Roosevelt and Mr. Churchill walked down the aisle.

Outside, around the church, for hours soldiers with rifles and machine guns had been stationed on housetops. Similarly armed patrols covered near-by alleys and all possible approaches, allowing no one to come near the place without credentials.

THE men who guard the President are for the most part young and husky. They are crack shots, as good with a tommy gun as with the .38-caliber revolvers which they wear every moment they are on duty. They spend several hours a month on the target range. Every one of them must be able to shoot accurately with either hand, because he never can tell on which side of the President's car he may be riding when trouble develops. Their pistol marksmanship is tested on one of the toughest target ranges in the country. The bull's-eye on their target is about half the size of the one ordinarily used on police and Army pistol ranges.

Each agent, since the war began, has been schooled to expertness against poison gas. All are graduate first-aid experts, and prominent psychiatrists teach them how to spot and cope with twisted mentalities. As to their own physical condition, most of them were college sports stars and they keep in perfect shape by working out several times a week at a gymnasium near the White
(Continued on page 59)



Experts guard the President as he dines with Camacho. Charles Frederics (behind Camacho) is the President's bodyguard.

GIRL ADRIFT

What danger gripped the ship when the girl was tossed overboard? She had to guess, and her ideas led a Canadian crew to daring action and an officer to romance

BY RICHARD HOWELLS WATKINS

ILLUSTRATED BY FRANK GODWIN

LUCY felt herself being heaved upward roughly, dropped, and rolled from side to side.

Besides that, there was something wrong with her wrist. It was heavy and constrained. What was all this? She gave it up and opened her eyes.

The little light that had been fastened to her bulky life-saving suit was now taped to her wrist. It was not aglow but the sight was warming to her. That feeble ray had been her one hope in all the salty wet hissing blackness.

She started up. She was in a berth in a very small cabin. She stared around. Bare, masculine, shippy.

She remembered everything. She slid to the floor, finding herself in enormous blue flannel pajamas. She pulled a blanket around her and pushed aside the curtain in the doorway. She moved in jerks down a short plunging passageway, past two other curtained staterooms. Turning a corner, she stopped at the door of a small room with a table at one side.

Two naval officers in worn uniforms sat at ease at this table. Each held a soup plate elevated in one hand. However this table, room, and ship swooped and swerved, they continued calmly to spoon soup from their plates to their mouths.

She stared, fascinated. They never spilled a drop.

"I had another, an Irish setter called Red," one man was saying. "That dog could—"

He saw her and stopped. He was not surprised. He stood up. A tall young man, brown-eyed, cheerful.

"Steward," he said to a closed slide above a sideboard, "our passenger has come to. Coffee."

"I'll tell the Old Man," said the other officer. He gave her a friendly grin as he passed her.

"You're in His Majesty's Canadian corvette Dufferin," said the tall officer. He looked at her solicitously. "Feeling fit? Would you like some rum in your coffee?"

She shook her head as he pulled out a chair for her.

"Name's Benham—Peter Benham," he said. "Navigation officer. It was in my watch, the middle watch, that we fished you out last night. You weren't bad at all, though unconscious."

Lucy opened her eyes more widely. In spite of his solicitude, he didn't take mere unconsciousness seriously.

"What Captain MacCrummond will want to know most is whether your ship was torpedoed last night."

Benham frowned in perplexity.

"Shall I 'old it for you, miss?" asked a short baldheaded man who was suddenly at her elbow, doing the balancing trick with a cup and saucer. "And 'ere's another blanket."

Dexterously he tucked it around her, still holding the coffee. When she took the cup from him the coffee went wild. He took it back and put the cup to her lips.

"I'll 'ave your uniform ironed for you in no time, miss," the steward promised as she drank. "An American WAC, aren't you, miss, and a second lieutenant, by that gold bar?"

"A third officer—same thing," Lucy said.

"We didn't see or hear anything—and not a ping out of the asdic all night," Benham said absently, as if resuming a discussion.

He straightened up as an older and heavier man in a duffel coat hurried in. "Captain MacCrummond," he said.

"There ye are, miss, fit and able," the captain said genially. His speech was flavored by a pleasant Scot's burr. Thick curly gray eyebrows overhung his steady eyes. "Now tell me—was your ship torpedoed out of the eastbound convoy last night—Friday night?"

"No," Lucy said. "I think she was captured—and probably scuttled."

"Captured!" She had jolted both Captain MacCrummond and Lieutenant Benham. "Captured?"

"Please start with the name of this ship—and your own, my dear," Captain MacCrummond said.

"The Silver Prince," Lucy said. "Lucy Oliver, third officer. They pushed me and nine other WACs on her when we got there at the last minute. A little old freighter."

The captain waited, not too patiently.

"I WAS berthed alone on a lower deck," Lucy said, speaking more quickly. "The steward, a nice old Norwegian but hard to understand, came sliding into my tiny room without knocking. He was excited. He pointed to the life-saving suit he'd given me, hustled me into it, and hurried me up on deck. He kept whispering 'Sh!' and peeking around."

Pete Benham leaned forward. Captain MacCrummond's gray eyes were severe.

"He helped me into a lifeboat already swinging out and went back for the others. I understood him to

say the Germans had seized the ship and would sink her."

"What Germans?" Pete Benham burst out. "I beg pardon, sir."

"Aye," said Captain MacCrummond. "What Germans?"

Lucy hesitated. "I thought at first he meant some of the crew were German agents," she said. "One man, calling himself Jensen, a junior engineer, was often prowling around near the bridge." Severely she suppressed a little shiver. "I didn't like him. Correct. That's how he acted. Correct. With a k."

Captain MacCrummond sat back. He made it plain he thought she had been reading books.

"AS I was drifting away from the ship I'm sure I saw a blacker mass near her like a submarine."

"Ye were drifting away?"

"Yes," Lucy said. "While I was in the boat I heard men shouting, shots, running. Somebody came rushing up to the lifeboat. I—I think it was this Jensen. I ducked down. Next instant one end of the boat dropped. He must have cut the ropes—the tackle—at that end. I was flung out—into the sea. I drifted away. It was then I thought I saw the U-boat."

"Did the ship sink?" Captain MacCrummond asked. His eyebrows curled in perplexed inquisition. "Any explosion, fire, flares, more excitement?"

"No," Lucy said. "Not a thing. I just drifted away."

The captain nodded to Lieutenant Benham, who spoke at once:

"Did you have a terrible feeling of not being able to scream?"

"No," said Lucy curtly. "What kind of question was that? 'I yelled when the boat dropped. And again—lots—as I drifted away.'"

"No other ship of the convoy helped you?" the captain asked.

"There weren't any other ships. We had broken down that night and the convoy had left us. The engines were still stopped when the steward woke me."

"Aye, yes," said Captain MacCrummond bleakly.

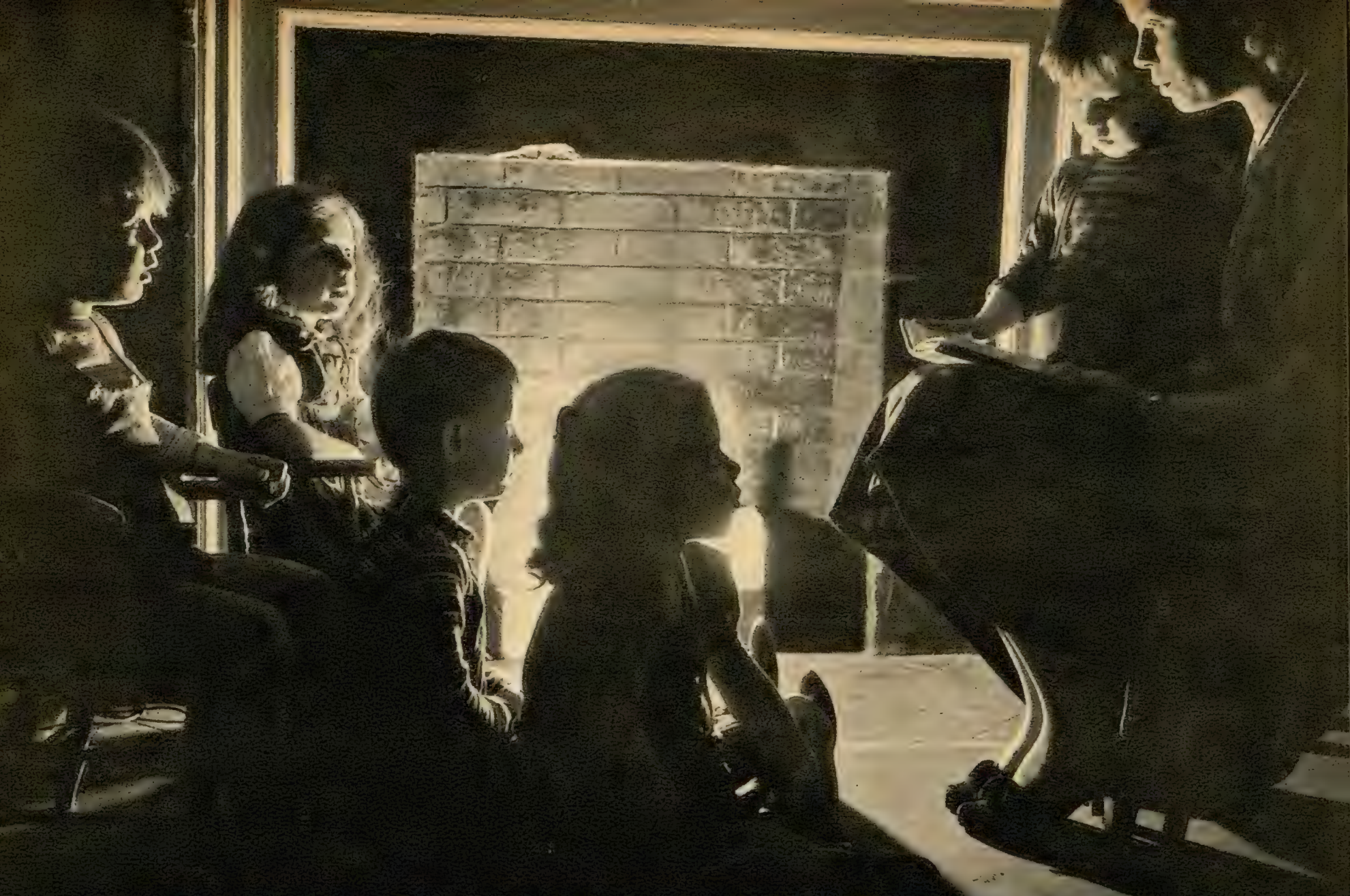
The captain stood up. Plainly he was puzzled. "Tell the first lieutenant I am coming," he said. The seaman hurried away. "We'll see that ye're comfortable as may be,

(Continued on page 48)

In the wheelhouse, Pete Benham faced the sullen men. Lucy recognized none of them.



JOHN
TODWIN



WHILE MOTHER WORKS

BY ELIZABETH BRYAN AND KATHERINE BONNELL

The community provides a daytime home for children whose mothers are at work.

SURE I'd like to take a war job, but who will take care of my kids?"

Any one who can answer that question for the millions of young mothers eager and able to do their share in boosting production, will have solved one of the most perplexing problems of America's war-swollen economy.

Mothers of children under fourteen have been generally exempted from the obligation of taking a war job, have been discouraged from seeking such jobs simply because their entry into war work would raise more problems than it would solve.

But if the basic problem of child care could be solved, then our war industries could help themselves to a pool of superior womanpower. Mothers make good workers. They have the incentive. They are not afraid of hard work. They have the ability.

Moreover, the prospect of some fathers being drafted makes it necessary for many mothers to look for a new source of income.

What can the nation do about looking after their children, thereby

The nation's war industries need woman-power! But who will mind the kids? Here's how one city does it

freeing these women for necessary work? Well, Hartford, Connecticut, has found the answer—an answer which conceivably could be a model for other towns and cities throughout the nation.

No matter in what part of Hartford little Jimmy Jones, Ruthie Cohen, Jacky O'Reilly, or Georgy Brown may live, their mothers can take on war jobs because they know that the kids will be well cared for while they work. Instead of setting up new wartime children's bureaus, or passing on the child problem to the already overburdened industries, Hartford's Board of Education has co-ordinated the city's social and

educational agencies into one vast child-care program.

The biggest project in this pooling of community effort is the day-care centers, where trained directors give youngsters of all ages a homey atmosphere of love and friendliness.

For babies, aged two to five, sixteen small-fee community nurseries operate from 6 A. M. to 6 P. M. in the public schools, the parochial schools, and the neighborhood centers. Ten schools and settlements offer cheap and nutritious lunches. After-school programs for school-age boys and girls flourish at schools, churches, and community centers. And for the summer, ten public "Kid Kamps" offered a six-day week of fun.

Mrs. Jones, who commutes ten miles to an airplane plant, can find a day-care center for her older children within a stone's throw of her own doorstep. Her toddler can have a substitute mother at a nursery right down the block. Depositing the youngsters en route to work, and calling for them is easy. And when they are cared for in their own neighborhood, every one knows they

won't be too far removed from familiar sights and playmates.

When mothers apply for day care, the wheels of the city's social-service machine begin to roll immediately. The Hartford Council of Social Agencies, a united body of welfare groups of every denomination, takes over the case work. A trained social worker calls to become acquainted with the family and to guide the mother in the placement of her children.

No mother need worry about the kind of people to whom she's entrusting her children. The community sees to it that the directors are always highly trained specialists. Even the volunteer assistants are given child-care courses by the Board of Education.

Active, too, are neighborhood high-school girls who help with the younger children at the after-school programs. Until their own Junior Victory Corps had been mobilized most of the big girls couldn't be depended upon to mind their own little brothers and sisters!

A glimpse at any of the Hartford nurseries will make you aware of how community teamwork has set up the best in baby-care programs. In the three large sunshiny rooms of the Vine Street Nursery, the little brick building which houses the Arsenal School Nursery, or in the shadow of the cathedral at the Bishop McAuliffe Center, the equipment and the nursery-school procedure are the last word. The approved blocks, slide ladders, paints, easels, and the pint-sized furniture are indoors. Outdoors there are jungle gyms and playground paraphernalia.

The mother (if she's free) stays with her child during his first week in nursery. As the child becomes adjusted to his new daytime environment, she learns about the schedule and goes off to her new job with no fears of Johnny's health or happiness. Children are given thorough health examinations, and mothers are given information on pre-

vailing contagious diseases. There's not much chance of an epidemic starting if a red throat is spotted early in the game.

According to those in charge, the family, as well as the child, often learns much from day-care centers. When there's a problem child, as there sometimes is, the social worker talks to the mother and together they try to locate the cause of the youngster's difficulties.

What really focused the attention of the entire Hartford community so strongly on its children's wartime needs? And where did the money come from for the huge undertaking that's now being carried out? Here's what happened, as we heard it from Miss Katherine Daniels, elementary school supervisor of Hartford, who directs the entire day-care system.

IN 1941 a civic committee surveyed conditions in the public schools and found evidence that many children were terribly undernourished, and that, outside of school, many others were getting into the kind of mischief which paves the way to juvenile delinquency. The report showed that large numbers of children with grades below par were coming to school every day without breakfast, that some working mothers were failing to make provision for hot lunches for their youngsters, and that children were roaming the streets after school uncurbed by any kind of supervision. With the growth of war industries around Hartford and the increasing employment of parents, the numbers of underfed and unsupervised young began to mount.

The Board of Education sent out an SOS to the established social agencies for help. They responded by offering the full co-operation of their set-ups and facilities. But the task of financing this all-embracing plan was more than the city could handle. The next step had to be an appeal to the government for the federal funds, available through the Lan-

ham Act, for such social emergencies. Before the federal funds could be obtained, Hartford had to agree to equal the amount of federal money provided. Through a budget based on fees, donations, and promises of contributed services, the city was enabled to guarantee its own 50 per cent.

The Lanham Act money came to Hartford in April, 1943, and immediately began the first official program to be carried out on a city-wide scale. In the interval between the application for funds and the actual money in hand, the committees—mentioned before—investigated ways and means of organizing model programs. The School Board found the public schools which were best suited, in location and buildings, to nursery and day care. They then sat down and rewrote a school program which would function the year round for our war generation. All the independent child-care agencies revised their programs along the lines approved by the Department of Education.

The charge of six dollars a week for nursery care doesn't seem too much to pay for all-day building of sound minds in sound bodies. The community sees that adjustments are made for parents who can't afford the standard set fees. There's a sliding scale with a two-dollar-a-week minimum for nursery care. After-school and lunch fees are modified to fit the family pocketbook, too. Last summer's "Kid Kamps" cost \$3.60 a week—\$2.40 for nine-to-five play every day, and \$1.20 for six hot lunches a week. Arrangements can be made for half time.

Already other war-industry cities are looking to Hartford for help. What Hartford has done, any city can do—provided public-spirited citizens will back up the social-service agencies. Judging from the manpower shortages around the country, the "Hartford Plan" might profitably be adopted everywhere.

THE END

Expert direction for young citizens—at Hartford's Union Settlement.



Play and work at the Arsenal School, Hartford.





"Rack, you can't stop the law," Prio said, "and you're not in this alone."

Broken River

WHAT HAS GONE BEFORE

RACK TINKER'S life was complicated by three things—the contract of the Broken River Logging Company, of which he was woods boss, to cut the Bishop spruce; a secret in his past; and two women.

One of the women was Sara Bishop, whose mother had given Broken River the contract on the advice of Clyde Prio, a lawyer and a friend of Rack and of Rack's foster father, Big Red Tink-

Spotting dirty work at the mill, Rack sets out to investigate, but an unexpected death and the long-awaited visit from the sheriff upset his plans

BY

JOHN and WARD HAWKINS

ILLUSTRATED BY JAY NOURBEL

er. Sara, pretty and stubborn, distrusted Rack and the company. She wanted the contract turned over to Sam Horton, owner of the mill that was to saw the logs. Rack wouldn't give it up and Sara warned him:

"There's a stumpage payment due in six weeks. If it isn't made, the contract breaks itself."

The second woman in Rack's life was Gale Nordlund, Prio's secretary. Gale was in love with Rack, and hoped he loved her, but there was a withdrawal

about him at times that made her wonder if she really knew him.

Neither Gale nor Sara was aware of the secret that had haunted Rack for ten years. Will Jaspers knew it—his wife, Lily, was concerned in it—and Will had tried to blackmail Rack. Rack refused to pay, but he did allow Jaspers to work at the lumber camp.

Sam Horton knew the secret, too.

"You killed my brother," he told Rack one day. "I can't prove it. Not yet! But I will!"

Rack worked against time to cut the spruce and make the stumpage payment before Sam could find his proof and take it to the sheriff.

On the day the payment was due, he gave Sara a check—and then proceeded to keep her "lost" in the woods until Prio had borrowed the money to make it good. Sara was furious at first. Then suddenly, when Rack kissed her, her anger faded.

"Did you mean that?" she asked.

"Yes," he said. "It's been there all the time, and I didn't know till now."

Trouble was waiting when they got back to Broken River. It had been discovered that the logs checked in at Horton's mill were some thirty per cent fewer than the Tinkers had believed they had delivered. This meant less money to pay the debts they owed. In addition, Gale, discovering that Sara was in love with Rack, sprang another surprise. She announced her own and Rack's engagement.

Rack took it calmly. Sara said nothing until she and Rack were alone.

Then, "You weren't making love to me!" she cried. "You were making love to a stumpage payment. And you got away with it—once! But you won't be able to meet the next payment. Then, Mr. Tinker, the Broken River Logging Company is all through!"

RACK put the speeder in the garage. He closed the doors and snapped the lock. Turning then, he saw a shadow on the path. A voice spoke to him:

"Rack?"

He said, "Yes, Lily?"

He could see her but faintly through the darkness. She was bare-headed; her black hair was rain-wet and shining. When she spoke again, her voice was rough with strain.

"Have you heard anything?"

"Not yet." Rack took her arm and she moved beside him, stepping carefully through the mud with low canvas shoes. "Horton's out of town," Rack told her. "He'll be back tomorrow or the day after."

Lily whispered something bitter.

"Easy there," Rack said. "It's no fault of yours. The guy's a louse, Lily. You can't change that."

"But it spoils everything!"

"The boys'll get the spruce somehow."

"What about Gale?"

Rack bent to look at her. "You heard?"

"Big Red was around telling everybody." Lily caught Rack's hand, her fingers taut. "Rack, will it

make any difference? I mean, will she—"

"Break it off?" Rack said. "I don't think so."

They turned onto the main road and went past the Tinker place. Just beyond was Rack's cabin. There was a light in his window; shadows moved on the glass.

"I've got company," Rack said.

"They're all there, waiting for you. I—I guess they're pretty glad about you and Gale."

Rack nodded. "Coming in?"

"I couldn't!" Lily's eyes were wide and dark. "Not when I know. I—I just couldn't . . ."

"Hey!" Rack caught her by the shoulders, shook her gently. "It's my neck, isn't it?" he asked. "Sure. Then let me do the worrying."

SHE bent her head suddenly, and Rack knew she was crying. She pulled free and ran into the darkness.

Rack went slowly to his cabin.

They were all there, all the old hands of Broken River. Gale they liked; Rack was their own. This, they thought, was just about the best thing that could ever happen. Big Red was expansive, grinning. He waved a glass of Angel Murphy's wine. "The lucky man!" he boomed. And the men descended on Rack, pounding his back, shaking his hand.

"It ain't a fact," Stump said, "till he kisses her, right here in front of God and ever'body."

A path was opened from Rack to Gale. Gale was sitting near Addie. She was pale and tense, watching Rack with a drawn-up nervousness. Rack crossed to her. He pulled her chin up, an easy smile curving his mouth. He bent and kissed her. Her lips were cold and unresponsive. He pretended to bite her nose. "Relax . . ." he whispered, and kissed her again.

"Hey!" Stump protested. "You'll wear it out."

They gave Rack a glass of Angel Murphy's wine. Big Red proposed a toast, Clyde Prio another. Small talk ran swirling through the room. Clyde came to Rack. He made a slow job of polishing his glasses. His face was sober; sincerity held his voice low.

"I'm glad, Rack. Really. I've been—well, hoping something of the sort would happen to me." He looked up. "Out of the question, of course. But it shows what I think of her, and when I say I'm glad you're the man, it should mean something."

Quietly Rack said, "It does, Clyde."

Big Red called, "Ain't that so, Rack?"

"What?" Rack asked.

"I was telling Roughhouse and White Hope the redhead was some put out when Gale give us the news." He laughed, remembering. "By the gods, her face fell a foot. Didn't it, Rack?"

Rack was conscious of Gale's

watching gaze. He managed a small grin, a gesture of unconcern.

"You were seeing things," he said.

"Seeing things, my eye!" Big Red turned to Roughhouse with a stage whisper. "You shoulda seen 'em when they come in. The Bishop kid looks like she just found the key to the mint. And Rack—well, a day and a night in the brush with a gal like her—"

Sharply Addie said, "Jerome, stop that!"

The others laughed. It was the pointed kind of joking newlyweds are plagued with; it meant no harm. But it brought a flush to Rack Tinker's neck. He turned to the table and poured a drink, waiting until the talk ran on before he turned back again.

Small talk, light-hearted, unimportant. This moment belonged to Rack and Gale; the others did their best to make it a pleasant one. But all of them were thinking of the spruce, the sky line, the burden of failure. A year ago this would have been an all-night spree; tonight it lasted but an hour longer. Addie's quiet "Tomorrow's a workin' day" brought them to their feet.

Big Red said, "One more."

They had it and began to drift away. Stump insisted that Rack and Gale have a moment alone. "You gotta give young love a break," he said, grinning.

Rack put his hand on Stump's face, pushed. "You and Cupid," he said. "Beat it." He closed the door.

GALE was standing by the table. There was still that tenseness about her, that drawn-up look. Rack made a cigarette, watching her trace the pattern of the tablecloth with a nervous finger. Like a kid, he thought, waiting to get spanked. He chuckled and his voice was light when he spoke to her:

"This isn't the night."

"What do you mean?"

"You're like a scared bride—ready to run."

"Don't joke about it." She bit her lips. "I—oh, say it, Rack. Tell me what a tramp I am!"

"Whoa!" he said. He went to her side; he put his hands upon her shoulders. "The lady is no tramp," he said gently. "She's tops. She'll make a fine wife."

"But, Rack . . ." Her head came up, puzzlement in her gray eyes. "Is—is this what you want?"

"No beefs in my department."

"But—"

And suddenly she had no words. She could only look at him. It was so completely the unexpected. She'd been prepared for a burst of anger, an argument, and now—there was only this quiet acceptance. His eyes held a humorous light that left her fumbling.

Rack smiled. "Maybe you're not sure."

"But I am, Rack. It's only that I thought—I was afraid . . ."

"Stop being afraid," he said.

The speeder horn sounded outside, sharp, insistent.

"That's Clyde," she said. "I've got to go."

"Yes," he agreed. "It's getting late."

She got her things and he walked to the door with her. She said, "Good night, Rack," and he cupped his hand under her chin and kissed her gently. "It's all right," he said, smiling. "We're engaged."

THERE was little sleep that night for Rack and no rest at all. Sara Bishop and Gale took swiftly changing places in his mind, dreaming and awake. The sky line was there. Will Jaspers and Sam Horton. Lily. Once, on the half line of consciousness, he seemed to have Gale in his arms. Her cheeks were tear-stained and she was whispering, "Rack, why didn't you tell me?" And he awakened then, to wonder why he hadn't.

But the answer was plain enough, when he thought it through. He had a day—two days, if Horton was out of town that long—to find the fault in the sky line. To make it work, or prove that it wouldn't. He wanted and needed those days uncluttered. Time enough for Gale and the others to know when they had to know.

It was hard to believe the sky line, a dream of years, was a failure. Behind that dream was careful planning. Cold calculation: the length of the line, the trips per hour the carriage could make, the logs per trip. His estimate had shown a generous profit. But the work showed a loss. Somewhere, then, he had made an error. Damn it, no! An error of five or ten per cent was possible. But thirty per cent—no!

He threw the covers back. Barefooted, he found the light. He dressed, shook life into the fire, then went to his desk. He found his estimate sheets. The figures were there, and he checked them from beginning to end. When he finally threw his pencil down, his face held a kind of grim satisfaction.

A few moments later he was pounding on Big Red's door. When Big Red answered, Rack told him what he'd found, or thought he'd found. The big man's face slowly purpled. He lifted a massive fist and all but smashed the table. "Great guns!" he said. "You've got it, boy! You've got it by the tail!"

"Maybe," Rack said. "Tomorrow we'll know."

Daylight was still an hour away when Rack met Swede Berg on the yarder under the sky line. Rack turned his flashlight on the pressure gauge. The steam was up, nudging the pop valve. There were tools scattered on the control platform.

"How long've you been here?" Rack asked.

"I come up early," the old man answered. "Been takin' up the frictions an' putterin' around. I just figured to get 'er lined up for a real day's work. With you wantin' a idea

of how much footage she can handle, I didn't like for it to break down."

Rack said, "You think it's your fault the rig hasn't paid, eh?"

"Well, the boys're cuttin' the timber. They've been gettin' it to the spar tree yonder." The old man's voice was dull with fatigue. "If the logs don't get acrost to the loader, it ain't nobody's fault but mine."

"You old coot!" Rack said.

Big Red came striding out of the darkness, his slicker glistening with rain. "You gonna scale 'em here," he asked Rack, "or acrost the canyon?"

"On the cars," Rack said.

"Then spit on your hands," Big Red told him.

"You told the boys we want an average cut?"

"I told 'em. You'll get the same logs, no worse an' no better'n we been shippin' out for two weeks."

"Good." Rack turned to Swede. "Now, look, you old blister. We want an average run today. No records, just a good solid day's work."

"But I figured—"

"You figured wrong," Rack said. "We don't want to know what we can do on a perfect day. We want to know what we've been doing every day."

Swede Berg was a long moment thinking. He turned and spat into the night, and when he spoke again, his voice was somehow less tired.

"Gotcha, boy. An' by the Lord, I hope you're right!"

HE gave Swede a nod when daylight came. The yarder's whistle shrilled one long and one short and the day's work had begun. The whistle blew two short and two short again and the carriage, high on the sky line, ran out, disappearing into the early-morning gloom.

Minutes passed. The cable drums spun, one growing bigger as the other shrank, until a short blast of the whistle stopped them both. More minutes. In his mind, Rack saw men scrambling over logs at the foot of the spar tree on the far side of the canyon, setting the chokers. One short then. Swede Berg threw a lever, opened the throttle. The cable drums spun again, dragging the carriage back. It stopped above the landing. Men were there to unhook the chokers. An upflung arm was the signal to send the carriage back. Before it was out of sight, the loaders had set a hook to each end of a log and the log was lifted and

Read

A MAN OF MALICE LANDING

By Dorothy James Roberts

The story of Marius Robinson, who left a small Ohio town to discover the world, who hit it big and returned to Malice Landing, where he met small-town prejudice but also found love and a surer way to live.

Coming Next Week

Abridged to an evening's reading time

dropped on a flat car. That was the operation. Rack timed three trips of the carriage, and then climbed up beside Swede Berg.

"Had many hold-ups?" he asked.

"Nope." The old man shook his head violently. "Red gets them logs to that spar, like I said. I never got to wait. He either don't get many breakdowns, or when he does he carries them logs down on his back."

Rack grinned. "I wouldn't put it past him."

He got off the yarder and made his way to the loader. One car was already loaded, the next was moving up into position. Rack watched the men work. There was never a lost motion here, never a log left on the landing when Swede brought a load from across the canyon.

RACK scaled the loaded car. He measured the diameter and the length of each log and computed the board feet. Each log was classified—the best called number one, the next number two, and the rest cull. If there was any question, Rack put the log in the lowest bracket. At noon Big Red climbed the slope from the canyon.

"How're we doin' so far?" he asked Rack.

Rack handed Big Red his book. Big Red looked at the figures.

"How's this stack up with what we been doin'?"

Rack told him.

Big Red swore vividly.

"But this's not a fair estimate," Rack said. "We haven't figured time lost for breakdowns, moving equipment, or rigging up."

"That ain't so much," Big Red said.

"About five per cent."

Big Red waved his hands. "Call it ten. What's the difference? It's plain enough, the way she looks now. Get your feet under you, boy. We got a job of work to do."

"Not yet," Rack said. "Keep your pants on. We'll have the dope by the time the day's over."

"Lord!" Big Red growled. "I got it now!"

He went away muttering.

The whistle called the men back to work. In an hour the train was loaded. The Shay pulled it away, shunting a string of empties under the loader. Then, hooking onto the loaded cars again, it panted away toward Westburyport. At two o'clock Swede Berg called Rack over.

"I—I gotta shut 'er down for a bit." The old man was as apologetic as could be. "That damn burner's fouled up an' I can't get steam."

"O. K.," Rack said. "Shut her down."

"I hate to two-block the job. I—"

"For the love of Mike!" Rack said. He scowled. "I'll tell you what. If you're so worried about slowing down the job, I'll rig you a crank and you can wind that line in by hand. How's that?"

"Aw, Rack—"

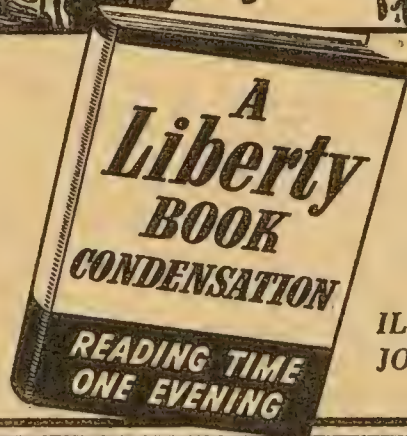
(Continued on page 64)

MALTA STORY

A condensation of the novel
by
W. L. RIVER

A bombshell of action — a tender, poignant love story — an epic of heroism.

This novel, based on the diary and experiences of Howard Coffin, formerly of the R. A. F., now in the U. S. Army Air Forces, tells one of the most gallant and stirring stories of this war.



ILLUSTRATED BY
JOHN RICHARD FLANAGAN

Based on the diary and experiences of Lieutenant Howard M. Coffin, U.S.A.A.F., formerly flying officer with the R.A.F. over Malta

THE passengers got out to stretch while the big transport plane was refueling at Luca Airdrome on the island of Malta. She was en route from Cairo to Gibraltar via the Mediterranean air bridge of which Malta is the keystone. Two government officials lit their pipes. A group of English women and girls sauntered along the airdrome runway, skirts blowing against their legs in a north wind bearing a slight odor of snow. They were going home on the Glasgow from Gibraltar, and they were full of laughter and high spirits.

A gray-headed Maltese batman in a white jacket came toward the plane, trundling a baggage truck on which were four duffel bags. A car had drawn up, and the girls, quickly alert, peered at it. When only one passenger

alighted, they wheeled, with fatalistic shrugs, and sauntered on.

But one of them stood watching him approach. She was smiling tentatively.

He wore the powder-blue uniform of the R. A. F. with a gold Maltese Cross just below the silver wings on his tunic and the wide black stripe of a flying officer on his sleeve. He looked about thirty, and he had the youthful and somewhat questioning expression of so many Americans of that age.

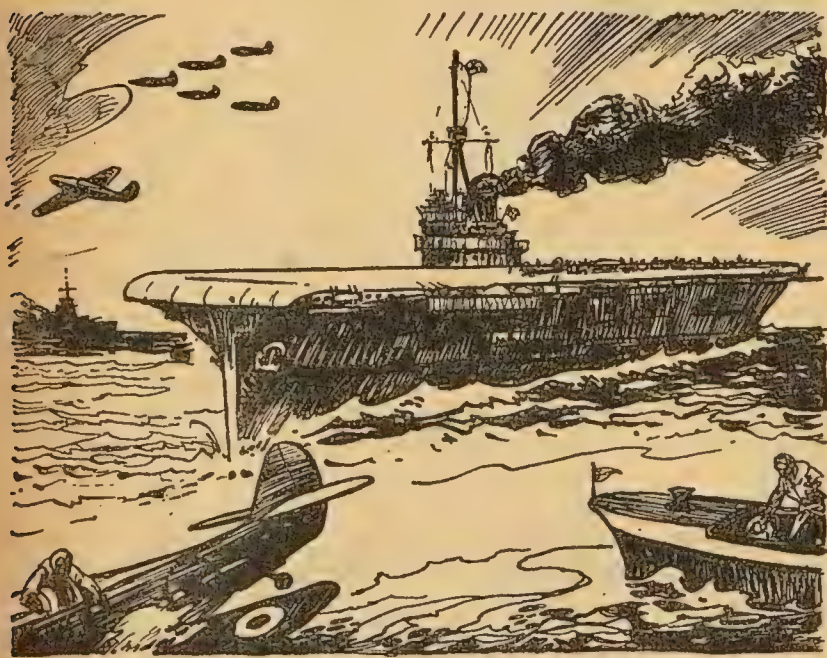
He noticed the girl, slim and young, with merry blue eyes in a small brown face. He started to smile in return, absently. The Maltese batman called, "Meestra Coff!" Instantly his smile faded. His eyes seemed to turn bitter

and resentful, as though he had been tricked—as though she had pretended to be somebody else.

She stood her ground and watched him. He and the batman loaded the duffel bags into the plane carefully, almost tenderly. What treasure could they possibly contain?

When the motors roared a warning of departure, the other passengers came hurrying back. The American had taken an aisle seat and was leaning back with closed eyes. The girl climbed across his legs and settled herself against the cabin window. It was just after sunset when the transport started down the long runway and hurtled out over the sea, leaving Malta small below, like a ship at anchor, her bow pointing with sturdy defiance into the northwest.

The American seemed to be sleeping. But the girl, studying his face, saw its muscles flicker. He was apparently alert to every vibration of the ship's motors, to her every maneuver, almost as though he were plotting her course. He was remembering things unseen, unknown to the others—every foot of Malta, every mile of the sea.



Into those miles of plotted enemy sea he had lost—in flames, in machine-gunned parachutes—most of his comrades. Masking his eyes in darkness, he winced every mile of the way to the southwest perimeter of the Malta control.

At Gibraltar the girl followed the American out of the plane and watched him supervise the careful transfer of his duffel bags to a porter's truck. He too was sailing on the Glasgow. He looked down at her now, aware of her merry blue eyes smiling up at him and of her lips parted in an unspoken question. He shook his head imperceptibly.

An absent smile came over his face, as if he heard a voice far away. Abruptly he turned away from her and went toward the ship.

Down in his cabin he tossed his own duffel bag onto the berth. Then gently he stowed the others away. After a time he went back on deck. For the first moment in more than a year he felt at peace.

In the summer of 1941 he had gone out to Malta. Later, when he talked about it back home, he said, "That Maltese Cross means I was lucky. It's a kind of reminder. When we'd been out there awhile we all knew the odds. Every fighter pilot at Malta had to figure himself like a dead man on a vacation. Every day extra was like a bonus."

He was discussing these things because he wanted to make it clear that his attitude in Gibraltar, on his way home, had not been a denial of life, but, in a manner of speaking, a denial of death. He had sensed, on that October night, that his comrades and friends were about to be vindicated, their deaths canceled out; and he withdrew to their company in contentment because they seemed far more alive than ever—more alive, even, than the living.

"For a long part of the way," he said, "those duffel bags

seemed more real to me than people. That's a crazy sort of an idea, isn't it?"

"It all depends. What was in those bags?"

"Oh, just odds and ends," he said with a vague smile.

IN Eddie Streets' there was a Bible he won at a Sunday school when he was about ten. And a Boy Scout knife that his troop gave him for saving another kid's life one time. He always carried that knife. He was just nineteen years old, and I guess those were the only things anybody ever gave him. He came up the hard way, starting to work when he was fourteen. He was a pearl diver in a Greek restaurant, and then a counterman in a hamburger wagon. And those five years he was studying up on planes and navigation and meteorology.

He had to prop himself up with a pillow in the cockpit; he was only five feet two and his legs were barely long enough to reach down to the rudder bar. But he was a wizard flyer, that boy.

Then there was Pete Steele. There were lots of letters in his duffel from girls, different girls. Maybe that would make you think he was a randy wolf; particularly if you'd seen him alive, leaning back against the bar at Maxime's, a glass in his hand, a sort of sleepy smile on his face, looking the girls over one by one; and the girls certainly liked him.

He and Eddie Streets came from the Eastern Shore of Maryland. But they never met until the day little Eddie walked into the day room at Polaris. That was the training school at Grand Central Airport in Glendale, California. Eddie saluted Pete—I guess because Pete looked tall and lanky and slightly bored, like a training officer.

"Edward Streets, sir," he said, "reporting for training to serve overseas in the Royal Air Force—"

Pete drawled, "Coffin, do you hear what I hear—something like a gremlin trying to talk like a man?"

Eddie got red in the face; he stood up on his tiptoes.

"Get down on your knees, mister," he said belligerently, "and I'll fight somebody my size."

Pete looked down at him and grinned, quick and friendly. "O. K., Junior," he said. "You win."

He put out his hand and Eddie took it, along with the nickname; he was Junior from then on. Pete and I got along together, but it was Junior who made us into a sort of a club—and Tedford too, later.

We met Don Tedford in Ottawa, where we were waiting for a ship to England. In his duffel bag there were half a dozen old pipes. He liked to sit with a pipe or cigar and a glass of port for hours on end. He didn't care about girls; he was engaged to a schoolteacher in Texas. You'd have thought he was a purely mental type—unless you took a good look at a picture of his girl in a bathing suit.

And he had an English friend, a flyer at Malta named Matthews, a poet. In Don's duffel bag there was a thin packet of Matthews' verses. Tedford had been a professor of history, and he and Matthews were planning to write a book about Malta. Don was something of an Indian type, with a wide forehead, high cheekbones, and fine black hair. In his duffel was a pair of military brushes; he used them thirty minutes every day.

BY the time we reached our training base at Debden, in England, Pete, Junior, Tedford, and I were close friends; and if we had needed anything more to make a permanent team out of us, it could only have been Jimmie. We met her on a week-end leave in London.

Her full name was Gwllyn James Towers. Gwllyn, from a Welsh grandmother, was unpronounceable, so people called her Jimmie. She had married an English flyer named Towers. She was tall and quick and beautiful. Her hair was like corn silk and her laughter was music. She was an English girl and her husband had gone off to the wars, and she was alone in London.

Three of us were sitting at a table when she came into the room. Pete was over at the bar, leaning back on his elbows, looking things over with a sleepy smile.

"Watch the randy wolf take notice," said Junior.

"Hope she likes him," Tedford said. "He's been a hard guy to live with since his last girl turned him down."

I didn't say anything. Something had happened to me,

almost like a voice saying, "Coffin, here she is." But later Pete was so pathetically in love with her that I couldn't do anything about it. She liked us all, and we had great fun together every week-end until we left England; and in time I even forgot to be jealous of Pete, just enjoying, like the others, being together with her. She had a magical sense of laughter and life.

When we four left her and England, it was like leaving the happy part of our lives behind.

We put in at Gibraltar on a sleepy summer afternoon. We had leave for the rest of the day, so we adjourned to the Capitol Bar. It was a change from the outdoor glare and heat, air-cooled, with indirect lighting and plenty of blue leather and chromium.

Eddie stuck to his Tom Collins and Pete to his Maryland rye and I to bourbon. A man near us—a British planter returning from the Far East—was telling about a young Malay girl who hadn't wanted him to go home.

"Wahoo!" Eddie shouted. "I wanna Malay girl!"

The man turned slightly, ready to scowl. Pete Steele smiled. "Pardon our brat, sir," he said. "He always gets vulgar when he drinks."

Junior winked at me. "When a guy gets so clean all of a sudden, it sure must be love. Don't be so damn superior, Pete, just because you got a girl in London."

Pete was, for a fact, looking pleased with himself.

"Yah," Junior said, "she was just stringing you along. Ask Hody." Hody was his name for me. "All the further you got was to rub noses. Hody could have done better than that."

"Listen, Junior," Pete said. "Climb up on that chair so I can hit somebody my size."

I grabbed his arm. "Take it easy, Pete. The kid's drunk."

"O. K.," said Pete. "Let's go."

OUTSIDE it was already dark. We had to help Junior walk. When we tried to put him to bed in his hammock, he kept falling out. Pete got some rope and we trussed him into it. In the morning his hammock was upside down, but he was still in it.

We all had terrible hangovers that morning. Don Tedford, across the table, grinned.

"Matthews and I started to hunt you up in the bars, but we got stuck with Anderson in the first one we hit."

"And wot a bloody 'ead I got this morning, laddies," said Anderson comically.

He was heavy-set, blond, with square pleasant features and a straddle-legged walk. He had been a cartoonist. Andy could speak properly when he wanted, but he used a cockney jargon usually, partly with the conceit of a self-made man but mostly to be funny.

Matthews was tall and slender, with a thin sensitive face and long thin fingers. Until you knew him well, you might think he was effeminate; but his body and mind had been forged together in a fine steel blade. He had been a professor of literature at Oxford, and could easily have gotten himself a soft berth in Censorship.

His friendship with Anderson was odd. Perhaps Matthews felt that Anderson, underneath, had the perceptions and possibilities of a first-rate artist; and he may have liked Andy for his simple, earthy self.

We had plenty of work to do that day. Our planes had to be brought up from the holds and uncrated. We had flown them from the training field to the port of embarkation, and had supervised their disassembly and crating before we boarded the Furious. Before the day was over, mine was completely reassembled and ready for flight. The others had been busy, too. The flight deck of the Furious was jammed with planes.

Shortly after one o'clock we received our flying instructions. We were given nine legs of flight totaling three hours and fifty-five minutes, and told that we should then expect to find ourselves over the island of Malta.

We were all keyed up and nervous because none of us had ever taken off from a carrier before. Two flights of ten planes went up safely. The leader of the third made his run down the deck. Then something went wrong. His plane catapulted into the sea and began burning. And then it was my turn to go, leading the fourth flight into the air. I sat tense. The sun-whitened runway looked

far too short and seemed to slope directly down into the sea. Then I got the flash of the signalman's flag and it was too late to worry. I gave my Hurricane everything she could stand. I must have gone off that deck like a helicopter, because the next moment I was climbing in a fast turn over the carrier, watching the rest of the flight coming up into formation.

We set our compasses and began the run. It was a fine clear day and we were wearing our tropicals. After many days on the water it felt good to be in the air again, and this time really on our way into the war.

For some years prior to 1940 the British had been working desperately to modernize the Maltese naval base and to make it one of the most powerful in the world. In Valletta harbor they installed a gigantic floating dock rivaling the one at Singapore; and if they had completed all their installations in time Malta would have given them absolute mastery of the Mediterranean; but the dock, so badly needed during the war, had to be sunk to protect it from Italian bombs.

A stupid and dangerous error was made in not building a great air base on the island. Had Malta been lost to the enemy, the Berlin-Rome Axis would have become a Berlin-Bizerte and a Berlin-Bagdad Axis—and the Mediterranean would have become an Axis lake.

But the British at Malta had one factor in their favor that they didn't have at Singapore—the people, who today possess the George Cross for their loyal and unswerving loyalty. To my knowledge there was not one saboteur nor fifth columnist on the island, although many of the Maltese have Italian names and Italian ancestry. These Maltese people—almost alone of all the people of the world—thought that Malta could be held against the enemy. And they turned the Axis timetable into a joke.

Two new airdromes were built, one at Takali in the center of the island, and one at Luca between Takali and Hal Far, the original air base. Airdromes were of no use without planes. And that is exactly where we, the scores of pilots who were flying planes from the Furious and Ark Royal presumably to the Near East, came in on a late summer evening in 1941.

Four of our flights, including mine, had been ordered to land at Takali. The others went on toward Luca and Hal Far.

Junior Streets was the first man out of his plane. "Sure feels good," he said, "to stretch again."

Don Tedford was looking around the field. "I wonder where all their planes are."

"Probably on twilight patrol," said Matthews.

"Well, 'ere's one bloke who don't mind," Anderson said. "We'll find more room at the bars, eh, laddie?"

IT felt good for us to be together here, with a fine cool night coming on and cold clinking drinks in a lazy round of the bars, and then a good sound sleep before taking off for some place like Cairo, or perhaps even Singapore. But first we had to disperse our planes for the night. An airman helped us.

"I'm Reed," he said. He was slightly bald and stooped. In the other war he had been a mechanic; then for twenty years he had been a mechanic in a Lancashire garage; and now in this war he was a mechanic. "I'll be your fitter, likely, so I'll just help you locate your bay."

"I hope I'm not taking somebody's regular space," I said.

"Oh, not at all, sir," Reed said.

"You do seem a bit short of planes here."

"Oh, aye," Reed said, smiling mildly as we trundled the plane. "We have just three. Now, if you'll follow along, I'll show you the mess."

Terra Kumbo Mess stood on a crest of ground just at the edge of Rabat, facing the city and harbor of Valletta six miles away. It was a huge three-story structure of sandstone blocks, the ancient palace of one of the Maltese Knights. Groves of gnarled old lemon and orange and lime trees stood at both sides of the house, whose weather-beaten walls were covered with flowering vines. The whole first floor was paved with marble blocks. To the left of the entrance hall was the dining hall, so large that long refectory tables and benches to seat forty men filled only a corner of it.

We ate in a silence broken only by the clacking of waiters' heels on the stone floor. We all could see that things had been prepared for us as permanent guests. I suppose that Pete Steele was the most disappointed. He had wanted to go to Cairo for a reason that was specific but perhaps impractical. He wanted to find Henry Towers and force him into a divorce agreement.

Jimmie had married him in a moment of romantic madness. When she discovered her mistake, Towers refused her a divorce. If he couldn't keep her, at least nobody else was going to get her; he made that very plain to her just before he went out to Cairo to serve in the desert campaign. Jimmie had told us the story in London.

The last hope for Cairo or Singapore, however, went glimmering when the station commandant talked to us after dinner in the recreation hall upstairs. His name was Raberleotti and he was a wing commander by rank, a stocky man with a swarthy, pleasant face; Italian and English by descent. He always had plenty of money, as we learned later when we came to know him well enough to call him "Rags" and "Ragbags" in the unofficial atmosphere of clubs and bars; but he had an eccentric disregard for clothes. He had served at Malta for three months and, before that, in the Battle of Britain, since the start of the war.

"Welcome to Malta," he said. "But I may as well warn you right off that this rich genial atmosphere upstairs here tonight is a fake—just a psychological trick to get you to stay."

His voice became humorously dry and businesslike.

"Drinks will be two-bob apiece. Cigars will be almost impossible to buy; and cigarettes, whose price will be nominal, will be rationed to smokers at the rate of fifty per week—for the time being."

HE gestured toward the fire grate. "That coal, gentlemen, represents the priceless gleanings of our fuel bins. There will be many chilly nights like this, but no wood or coal to burn until our convoys get through to the island. And that's where you men come in. We'd like to form, out of you pilots, two squadrons of fighters to help make it possible for supply ships to come safely through to Valletta harbor with fuel for the power plants of Malta, and food to keep Malta alive, and tools of resistance so that the military and civilian forces on our island can finish their appointed task.

"Since the day when Mussolini launched his first bomb into the heart of Valletta, these people have stood firm. Not one of them has aided the enemy or slacked at his job. We promised them planes, and they built our airdromes out of the rock, but we couldn't live up to our promise and deliver those planes.

"Today they saw you come in from the sea, and they scarcely dared to believe, to hope. You can leave the island as you came; but they can't. You can leave, because we don't want to keep any men here against their will. It will cost many planes and lives if you stay. You can go—but the people of Malta hope that you stay."

There was a moment of silence. None of us Americans wanted to be the first to speak, since we were a tiny minority of four. But Anderson got up.

"Sir," he said, "I don't see a single bloody bloke in this 'ere Terra Kumbo Mess who wants to chase horf."

Just at that moment the raid alarms sounded. A very young British flyer, Gerald Orth, jumped to his feet.

"There's your answer, sir," he said in an emotional voice. "I'm for combat duty, if you say the word."

Ragbags smiled dryly. The clamor of the alarm increased. Young Orth looked around at our uncertain faces and turned back to him.

"Please, sir," he said, "I'll go alone, if every one else is afraid."

"Is your plane safely dispersed?"

"Yes, sir," Orth said. A spot of color flamed in his smooth thin cheeks.

"Then disperse yourself safely, too," said Rags, smiling. "The safest place is under the billiard table, I'd say. And if you don't get there first, I shall."

Young Orth drew himself up. "Then, sir," he said, "I think I know why you have been here and still are alive, out of seven men."

The alarms had ceased now, and it was so silent in the room that we could hear Orth breathing hard and fast. Ragbags approached the boy slowly.

"I think you will find," he said in a very soft voice, "that the bombs will start falling in less time than any of us could get out to the airdrome and climb upstairs."

Even as he spoke, it seemed, we heard the far-off crash of a bomb, as the Italian flight came in high over Valletta; and the ack-ack guns began.

"You see," Rags said, "it is only ten minutes by air from the Catania base. Their planes come in at ten thousand feet. It takes, even in one of our Hurricanes, ten minutes to climb that high. When you are on duty down at the airdrome, we'll give you a chance—and so will the Italians. But until then," he said, suddenly grinning at the boy, "we'd rather have a live young Orth than a bit of dust in our drink. All right?"

He thrust out his hand. The boy hesitated, coloring still more, and then slowly put out his own hand.

"One more round before you start paying," Rags said. He raised his voice. "Outside!"

A Maltese bar-boy in a white jacket entered. We never learned his right name; he was Outside from that night on. He smiled, taking our orders. A bomb crashed near by. Ragbags and Outside, of all the men in the room, didn't wince, not even around the eyes.

"Macchi 202," said Ragbags, "probably leaving his card on you fellows who just moved into the neighborhood."

We all laughed, then, and loosened up. When we went to bed, an hour or so later, we felt like old hands.

There were to be two squadrons built out of the men in the Terra Kumbo Mess. Squadron X was to be mine, commanded by Ragbags himself. The other was Y. Rags had worked out the duty order already and I was free until afternoon.

Pete and I were to share a room, and our batman was a grizzled Maltese of indeterminate age whose name was Charlie Grek. When I came in that night, Pete was at the desk. He had just sent Jimmie a wire and now was working out a letter. Charlie was turning down our beds.

"Ogadoke," he said. "Beds all made."

"Stick around," Pete said. "I got a letter going out on the night mail."

"Mails all screwed up," Charlie said. "Maybe once a month. Ogadoke I go to bed?"

"This is important—it's got to go out tonight."

Charlie sat down on Pete's bed with a smile of parental resignation. "Ogadoke," he said. "Put in the pillar box at Rabat. But a month just the same."

I stretched out on the other bed. A picture of Jimmie Towers hung over the desk. There was everything in that face that I ever had wanted, beauty and character and humor, but she was far away in England. Far away over Pete's head.

AFTER lunch next day I went down to the airdrome. In the dispersal hut, I squinted at the assignments on the bulletin board. I had drawn White Two, which meant wingman to the last flyer in the squadron formation. Rags, the squadron leader, stood waiting for a cup of hot tea, and I walked across to him.

"Thanks," I said dryly.

"Somebody's got to be Tailass Charlie," he shrugged.

I went out on the airdrome and found the plane I had been assigned. Don Tedford was tinkering with the controls. He had flown her that morning.

"She's nose-heavy," he said. "And she carries a bit of left rudder bias. But I'm blessed if I can find out what's really wrong with her guts."

Reed came up and we left him working on her. Tedford looked at me and smiled one of his rare smiles. "It's not exactly like Debden," he said. "Good luck!"

And then he was off toward the Terra Kumbo Mess. I went back into the dispersal hut. In a corner of the room young Orth was throwing darts. He walked up to the board to retrieve his three darts. They were all in the center ring. "Look here," he said. "I'm trying to break my record of twelve bull's-eyes—but it's a nuisance walking up to the board. Spoils my rhythm, you know. Would you mind awfully to retrieve for me?"

He was a case of egotism, all right, but his tense, boy-

ish smile saved him from arrogance. He scored three more bull's-eyes. I retrieved for him. Rocky Main, a big Canadian, came and watched. Once again Orth put three darts in the center ring. That was twelve.

"Damn good shooting," said Rocky. "Maybe you'll have better luck in White One than Denby."

"I asked for White One," Orth said. "Denby was my roommate."

"I didn't know," Rocky said.

"What about Denby?" I asked.

"Went for a Burton this morning."

There was a moment of silence. Denby was the first of us to die—to go for his last glass of beer.

"This morning?" I said. "I didn't see any action."

"Not here," said Rocky. "Ragbags was too smart. He must have smelled a raid coming, because we met the Eyeties way out at sea. Denby was flying White One, and a Macchi came out of the sun at him. But Charlie got the bloody Dago."

"The Italian, you mean," Orth corrected him. He smiled at me. "Here goes for thirteen," he said.

But he failed to score again.

"Thanks," he said to me. "I'm for a spot of tea now."

"That kid's a funny one," Rocky said, watching him go. "No wonder he wanted White One."

"And I'm Flying White Two," I said. "I guess I'm his dart-boy for fair."

Junior and Andy came in, and they had just heard the news about Tedford knocking down a Macchi. Junior was very excited.

WE started a poker game, but all of us were excited too, and we didn't play very well. When the telephone rang, we all jumped. Rags answered it. We couldn't help hearing the voice at the other end of the wire.

"This is Group Captain Orth, Fighter Control," it rasped. "Is there a Gerald Orth in your squadron?"

"Yes, sir," Rags said. He put young Orth on.

"Hello, father," young Orth said. "We flew in late last night. I meant to surprise you this evening."

"You disobeyed my orders," the rasping voice said. "I don't care to speak to you, Gerald. Put your commander back on the line."

Young Orth's face tightened. "Yes, sir."

Now Rags clamped the receiver close to his ear, and all we heard were his replies. Young Orth stood waiting. Rags hung up and smiled.

"He said he was going to have you transferred to Control," he said. "But I told him that until the order came through you were a member of this squadron and I couldn't keep you on the bench if we had any action."

"Thanks," young Orth said. "All I want is a chance."

In a minute the phone rang again. "Orth, Fighter Control," the same voice rasped. "Enemy forming a plot of twenty plus over the Sicily coast."

Rags snapped the phone down. "Scramble," he said.

Reed was waiting for me, standing on the wing of my ship. "She's quirky, sir," he said. "But she'll get you up—and I fancy she'll get you down."

I found Orth and went on his tail as we all came up into formation. At about five thousand feet Rags came on R. T. to tell us to snap on our oxygen masks, and at ten thousand we all leveled off. Behind us and to the east, two squadrons from Luca Airdrome came into the air. But there was no enemy aircraft to be seen.

"Good work, boys," Rags said, "but I think the Eyeties are up to tricks." He switched over and talked to Control. "All right," he said, coming back on. "We're staying upstairs. E for Edward and P for Pat. Let's go."

I consulted my code card. E for Edward meant a spot about ten miles due north of the little island of Gozo; and P for Pat meant to sit around at an altitude of fifteen thousand feet. We did that for ten minutes or more, just patrolling. We began to talk back and forth on R. T. Rocky Main, who was in Yellow One spot, said to young Orth, "White One, what was your old man yowling about?"

"He didn't want me to come here," said Orth. "He thought I was at Oxford."

"Were you?"

"As a matter of fact, no," said Orth.

"Cut off," Rags suddenly said. "Bandits at three o'clock, down at ten thousand."

We followed him down through a hole in the clouds and saw them, a plot of twenty plus at a lower altitude over Valletta. The ack-ack guns began sending up their metal barrage. Then the Italians spotted us, dropped their bombloads indiscriminately, and streaked for home.

Rags turned and went down the side of that white cloud mountain like a man on skis. We followed.

"We'll intercept at the base of the clouds," Rags said.

"Get your man if you can, but don't follow them to sea."

We came down through a big wide pit of sunlight just as the Italians broke into the open. And down from another direction came the squadron from Luca. Two enemy bombers and then three fighters went down in great black draperies of twisting smoke. One of our fighters exploded. At first I thought it was Junior, but then Orth closed up



on him, and I realized it must have been Green Two, Junior's wing. Now Orth was flying wing to Junior, and I was still tailing Orth. We all came out low over the ocean, and the Italians were gone again.

"Return to base," said Rags.

But young Orth spotted a wounded bomber through a break in the clouds, and cut away from the squadron suddenly. His action left Junior unprotected; but we were on our way home, and my job was to stay on the tail of White One. So I peeled off and went after young Orth. All of a sudden I realized that we were following the oily trace of the burning bomber almost straight up through the clouds, and I knew that he wasn't as badly hurt as he had seemed. I tried to switch over to talk to young Orth, but he had already gone on the air.

"White One," he said. "Calling Group Captain Orth at Control."

Riding on the tail of that Italian bomber, he led me up through the clouds, describing the chase to his father all the while.

Just as I had feared, several Macchi fighter planes suddenly streaked out of the clouds right on Orth's tail. And he didn't seem to know; he kept machine-gunning that twisting wreck like a man out to throw thirteen bull's-eyes, whatever the cost. I went down in a quick dive, hoping to pull those Macchis away from his tail. It worked. I decided to play dead, I gave my ship a lot of right stick, with neutral rudder, a maneuver called an aileron turn. This puts a ship into a flat spin, so called, and to the enemy it looks as though she's done for. The old girl responded. But when I was ready to streak out for home, her nose wouldn't come up. She was diving straight down toward the sea.

I switched on my radio. "White Two," I said, "calling Control."

"Come in, White Two."

"I'm bailing out."

"Where are you, White Two?"

I took a quick bearing and gave it.

"Detonate your identification system, White Two."

I pushed the detonator button, blasting my radio signal into silence with a small muffled explosion, and then I unbuckled my Sutton harness and pushed back the perspective-hood. I had never jumped before, and I was scared a little. I crouched on the seat of my cockpit and kicked the stick forward as hard as I could, making the plane put her stubborn nose down all the way in a steep fall that tossed me out backward. Up above I could see the Italians, still drifting down. But as I jerked the rip-cord and my parachute started to open, they waggled their wings—and were off toward Sicily.

I drifted down slowly, blowing up my Mae West on the way. Then I cut the parachute loose as I hit the water and punctured the oxygen bottles inside my dinghy pack. The little lifeboat swelled up as I pulled open the pack and took out the paddles. I climbed into the rubber tub.

It was coming on toward evening and a stiff wind was blowing from the northwest. A reconnaissance plane flew low overhead and circled like a gull. Then it slipped away. Just then a wave washed the paddles out of my grasp.

"Coffin," I said, "it's your own damn fault. You ought to know better than to put a quirky ship into a flat spin."

I started paddling for shore with my hands. A few minutes later one of our Air-Sea Rescue boats came roaring out from Valletta and picked me up. When I got to Terra Kumbo I changed into dry clothes and went upstairs for a drink. Young Orth was there.

"She was blazing like a comet when she smashed," he was saying. "Beautiful sight, what?" He smiled at me.

"I wouldn't know," I said. "I was busy elsewhere."

"Oh, sorry," he said, coloring. "Sorry I lost you. But I suddenly looked around, and whammo, no Tailass Charlie!"

"That's right," I said dryly. "Whammo!" I walked over to where Tedford and the others were sitting.

"Don't give the kid that. He's all excited about bagging a bomber," Tedford said quietly.

"Well," I said, "I don't like a guy with a glory complex. He even wants me to slobber over the beauty of men burning up."

THE next moment Orth was standing there, and the room had suddenly gone very quiet. "I said I was sorry," he said tensely. "Will you have a drink with me?"

He was holding a tray Outside had brought in. His hands trembled and the glasses chattered together. Rags came over and took one.

"Thanks," he said, watching me. "Drink up, boys—we all did a good day's work."

"O. K.," I said, taking a drink. "Thanks."

Orth smiled warmly. "And thanks to you for helping me away."

"O. K., O. K.," I said. "Forget it."

We drank. Later Rags took me aside.

"Listen, Yank," he said, "I don't want any British-American war on top of the one we're already fighting."

"That's all right by me," I said. "I didn't come over here to start anything—I came to help end it. But I expect a fair break. I didn't have to come, you know. It's not my war."

"No?" he said. "Whose war is it, would you say?"

"Yours and Orth's," I said. "And Charlie Grek's."

Rags looked down at his hands. They were closed and he watched them open again. Then he looked up and smiled.

"I'd like to take you Yankees down to Mosta tonight," he said.

After dinner we borrowed bicycles from Charlie Grek and some of the other Maltese workers at the Mess. Rags and Junior and I pedaled ahead of Pete and Don.

Mosta was a small town with a church, a small hotel, a barbershop, a few stores, and a bar. It was closed. So was the hotel. There was a wireless office in the hotel.

"Damn!" said Pete. "I thought there might be a wire from Jimmie."

In the church across the moonlit square we could hear an organ and voices. We entered and took seats in one of the back pews. The priest intoned his beatitudes in a clear voice and the organ rumbled and the worshipers intoned their responses in a roar of whispers.

Next to Junior a young girl was kneeling, with a beau-

tiful bit of Maltese lace over her black hair. Her wide childlike eyes reflected the candlelight. Her smooth round features stood out, shadowed slightly, with the eager purity of a young Madonna. Junior slowly slipped to his knees alongside her, unable to take his eyes from her face. The service ended. The girl turned, then, feeling him watching her. For a moment they stared at each other. She flashed him a little smile—then she was gone. Junior started to rise as though to follow, but Rags pulled him back. The priest had started to speak.

"I speak in English," he said, "because Italian is the tongue that fawns on Hitler and because our English-speaking friends have come winging to our aid from over the sea. Tonight we have prayed for them all. And may they be safe in the blessing of God."

The church slowly and quietly emptied and the priest came down the nave. Rags introduced us.

Father Osta was tall and spare with a quizzical smile and a thatch of graying hair. He shook our hands and said, "Welcome here. It is a beautiful thing to come from America to our little island in the sea. With your help, we will hold it against our common foes."

It was a formal speech, but he blinked as he said it, and so did we all, and Rags cleared his throat.

"Father, we were thinking of having a glass or two at Marie's," he said. "Will you join us?"

Father Osta smiled. "And when has a friendly glass been a bad thing?"

We went outside, crossing the square again. The bar was open now. It was small and bright, with four tile-



topped tables and a blue-tiled floor. Back of the little bar was the same girl we had seen in the church. She was small as a child, smaller than Junior, and she gave him her shy little smile. He went toward her. The rest of us sat down at a table and ordered from a large woman with a jolly brown face and long gray braids.

"Charlie Grek's sister, Marie," Rags said to me. "And the girl back of the bar, Lina, is a niece."

There was an ancient player piano in the place and Junior had put in a coin. In the little space between the tables and bar he was dancing very solemnly with Lina. And Pete Steele had gone across the room and was standing with his elbows back on the bar and his eyes slightly closed, smiling and sleepy, watching her.

"Oh—oh!" I said. "Here comes trouble—or is Lina as shy as she looks?"

Father Osta took a sip. "I can't say. Nice wine."

Rags said smiling, "He can't talk—but I can tell you about Lina."

She had been educated in the convent near Mosta. Her people owned a little house, and between Mosta and Terra Kumbo they had a few acres of terraced land. Both parents were killed by German bombs during the last Nazi raid in early June. She lived on in the rubble of her father's house, she tended the fields, and she went to church, as before, but she began to loiter near the friendly noises of Marie's bar. Marie, finding her outside

one night, took her in. Lina became useful at the bar, and Marie had no fault to find, except that she smiled at the men too often. It was hinted she had fallen from grace.

Pete cut in on Junior and danced closely with her in a small space between the bar and the tables. She was laughing at something he was whispering into her ear; and Junior came over and sat down.

"Look. I find a girl my own size," he said, "and I ask Pete politely to lay off. But he laughs and starts building her up."

Marie shoved him back toward the floor. "Lina needs fun," she said.

We watched Junior cut in on Pete. This time he smiled a little, and Lina smiled back.

Marie started to close up the bar at ten. "People cannot drink only," she said apologetically.

"All of them fish," Rags explained to us. "Lina and the men and Marie. People have to eat. They work in the fields during the day, and at night hunt for sardines."

"Do they walk all the way down?" Junior asked.

"And back," said Rags. "About 4 A. M."

AT Terra Kumbo we found Charlie Grek waiting outside.

"We met your family," said Rags. "They're going for sardines tonight."

"I know," said Charlie. "Me too."

"Thanks," I said, "for the bike."

He pedaled away, saying "Ogadoke. Good night."

"Come on upstairs, Yank," Rags said to me. "I still want to talk. I'll buy you a drink."

He bought a partly gone bottle of bourbon, the last bourbon on Malta, Outside said.

Rags grinned at me. "Drink up," he said.

"Here's how."

"To the Greks."

"Awful lot of Greks in the world," I replied.

"We're all Greks for the duration," he said. "Or, say, the duration of our lives."

"Listen, Rags, I thought of that before. But what hit me tonight was the fact that they seem to believe in something and I don't know what it is."

"They believe in themselves," Rags said. "In people. That means us—and young Orth. We're all together in this."

"Right. But give me a chance. You gave Orth one."

"Listen, Coffin," he said. "It doesn't matter who bags the enemy planes. Unless a man is out for glory—and then he won't last very long. I picked you for a steady type and so I planted you on the kid's tail. Some men won't play unless they can be aces, but somebody has to play tackle and guard, too, and I thought you understood. It's easy enough to lead, in a way, but it's hard as the devil to fly wing to another man. And I need a lot of good wingmen to keep my squadron intact."

"Our job here is to help lift the siege, to get convoys through. It doesn't matter how many enemy ships we bring down or who bags them. Glory is out; personal glory, I mean. Nobody will ever pin a medal on the Greks. But if we can hold Malta we'll help to win the war."

"O. K., Ragbags," I said. "I'm on your side."

The equinox came with winds at gale velocity and heavy rain. Rags drilled us in combat tactics and we spent our spare time playing cards, arguing about whether or not the Nazis would capture Moscow before the winter began, or just standing at the window and looking out across the airdrome at our ships in the rain.

Pete grew particularly touchy because no word came from Jimmie Towers. A dozen times each day he called the wireless offices at Rabat and Mosta, and once a day he called the cable company at Valletta. He began to drink a little more than he should, and he smoked a week's ration of cigarettes in two days.

"Do you think something might have happened to her?" he kept asking. "There was another raid on London, according to radio."

"If she was hurt," I said, "she'd let us know."

"But if she was killed?" he said. "What if she was killed?"

"Damn it, Pete," I finally said, "maybe she's just busy."

"Too busy to send me a cable?"

"Maybe it's just her way of signing off," I said. "After all, we had a few weeks of fun in London with Jimmie, but that doesn't necessarily commit her to a lifetime of cables and letters."

He eyed me. "Where do you get that 'we' stuff?"

"Well, didn't we?" I said. "We were always pretty much in the plural."

"Go to hell," he said abruptly. "I'm going to get drunk."

The rain stopped next morning, and the clouds began blowing away. But still the Italians didn't come. We took the offensive next day. None of us knew it, but a convoy was on the way from Gibraltar. We came out in the morning and found that overnight our fighters had been turned into bombers.

"Each Hurricane will carry eight forty-pound bombs," said Rags. "They're homemade bombers, but the best we can do. What about it, X?"

Squadron X approved heartily. We did convoy patrol that day, looking for lurking enemy subs, keeping our sea zone clear. There was no action, but every one's spirits were up. Next day we heard about the convoy, and had a wild celebration that night. Before morning it docked in the harbor of Valletta.

At eleven o'clock on the second night the Italians came over, flying high in a plot of forty plus. Bombs fell all over the harbor. But the stevedores and dock workers worked grimly throughout the raid. At four in the morning the enemy returned, but trucks laden with food and supplies continued to roll away from the docks. The siege of Malta, every one felt, had been broken at last. On the third night the convoy ships, emptied, slipped away to sea. And we carried the war to the enemy.

Raids were made on the Sicilian air bases at Catania and Camiso Airdrome, and also on Tripoli. And we intercepted and blasted out of the air three transport planes and several of the great air tankers in which the Germans were flying high octane across to Rommel.

Young Orth did particularly well. He was a cold fighter. When he had aced himself with five enemy ships to his credit, Rags sent his name through and he was given the D. F. C. His father, long since resigned to his son's flying, made the presentation. His hands trembled as he pinned the decoration on Gerald's tunic.

Group Captain Orth's wife was killed in one of the first raids on London. His elder son was shot down at Dunkirk. He himself commanded a group of fighter planes. One night he flew them on a mission from which thirteen men failed to return. He made a mistake, a costly one, and it broke his nerve. He himself crashed. His body recovered, but not his spirit. There was talk of pinning him with the responsibility for thirteen deaths. The talk languished, but Captain Orth couldn't forget. He said good-bye to Gerald, who was at Oxford, and came out to Malta to bury himself in the Fighter Control. When Rags told me all this, I began to see the pattern in young Orth. He wanted to wipe out the memory of thirteen deaths.

But at the time I didn't understand young Orth at all. And I knew Pete Steele as intimately as any one in the world; but I didn't understand him, either, until much later. I remember that during this time he often sat brooding all night long with a bottle of Maryland rye. Liquor had no visible effect on him.

ON Lina's birthday, the 7th of December, 1941, Marie gave a Maltese feast day for her niece at the family place near Mosta. All of us Americans, perhaps because of Junior, were invited. We arrived there just as the sun was beginning to set. The house had been reduced by bombing to a heap of sandstone, but the tool shed and the winery were still standing. The people were out beyond, on the arbor terrace. Manoel and Joe offered wine from an ancient keg, the musicians played, and the sun sank in the sea while we danced with Lina.

As the moon came up, the dancing narrowed down to Junior and Lina and Pete. Marie, with a rosy smile from the wine, sat under the purple grapes that fell softly into her lap as she watched, and her head grew heavy. I was enjoying the balmy night and the wine, and a discussion between Father Osta and Tedford. Finally Junior, too

tired to dance any more, joined us and fell asleep. The musicians left their instruments and drew themselves large flagons of wine. Lina and Pete disappeared.

Rags broke in on us like a bombshell. "Listen, Yanks!" he said. "America is at war!"

A flash had just come over the radio about the bombing of Pearl Harbor. We woke Junior and went to find Pete. We found him in the winery, where Lina had a bed of straw, and he stumbled to his feet with a drunken smile. Junior just stood in the doorway, looking at Lina. She crouched against the wall, her lips drawn back from her teeth like a savage smile. He reached out his hand, as though not sure she was the girl he had known.

"Lina," he said questioningly.

Just then a siren cried, and far overhead, descending in a rising whine, there came a plane. A great black grape of iron came down to burst on the earth.

The flash was blinding. Lina ran outside. Outlined by the white fire of another bomb, she looked back laughing—high, wild laughter. Then she turned and ran away under the savage rain of bombs. Junior started after her, but Rags caught his arm. We could hear the snarling whine of the ships overhead.

"Messerschmitts," said Rags. "The Germans are back."

The real Battle of Malta began that night. The Italian rehearsals were over. The German Luftwaffe had returned to Sicily with orders to blow us out of the sea. They started on Valletta. We went into the air against them, but they were too many for us, and their planes were too fast, and when a man bailed out of a burning ship they followed him down until his parachute opened and then they riddled him with machine-gun fire.

"Forget glory," Rags told us. "Don't be afraid to run for it if the enemy has superior altitude or numbers. And if you have to bail out, delay pulling your rip-cord as long as you can—and then pray to God. And, above all, heads up—and hang onto your nerve."

One night, either the 12th or 13th of the month, the others all turned in early and only Junior and Pete and myself were left. Outside, ready to lock up the bar, said that it was last call for drinks. Pete looked across the room at Junior. For days those two had been very silent.

"I'll buy you a drink," Pete said.

Junior didn't answer.

"Hey, High-pockets," Pete said, "I told you I'd buy you a drink."

Still Junior didn't say anything.

"All right," Pete suddenly said in a loud voice. "So I'm a no-good bum. Go ahead, say it."

"I didn't say anything," Junior said in a low voice. "Why don't you buy me that drink, instead of shouting?"

He made a weak effort at a grin. I started to leave, but Pete bought me a drink too. He was humble, almost happy again, seeing Junior smile.

"I'm sorry, Eddie," he said. "I was stinko the other night. I just lost hold of myself. I'd give my right arm if I hadn't."

Eddie's eyes seemed to mist up a little as he spoke. "Forget it, Pete. You were right all along. She was asking for it. Only one I blame is myself."

THAT seemed to settle the matter. One night soon afterward we went to Mosta, to Marie's. Neither she nor her brothers had seen Lina since the party, although sometimes her bed seemed to have been slept on.

On Christmas Eve we went to the Mosta Cathedral for midnight mass. Father Osta had invited us all. As the service started, a small figure came hesitantly down the aisle and knelt not far from us. Junior tightened like a spring when he saw it was Lina. Her face peered through her veil, toward the bright altar, like the hungry pure face of a child. Toward the end of the mass she saw us, and her eyes wavered, lingered a moment on Junior, and then fixed on Pete. Her lips drew back in the same savage little smile as before. As the service ended she rose quickly and made her way out of the church. When we got outside she was gone.

On New Year's Eve our squadron held a dance at Terra Kumbo. Toward midnight Charlie Grek came upstairs, looking for Pete. Lina was downstairs at the door.

Pete was nowhere around. I went downstairs to see if

I could get her to come in. It seemed wrong for her to be in the dark, furtive and unhappy. I saw her standing near the ancient palm trees with some one. It was Pete; I could hear his voice.

"I'm sorry, baby," he said, low. "I'm sorry you feel that way. But the other night was all a mistake."

I started to turn away, but Junior was there. His hand tightened on my arm. Lina was looking up into Pete's face.

"Is it because I am bad?" she said softly.

"Listen, baby," Pete said. "You feel a certain way about me, and I feel like that about somebody else."

Far away, the bells started to chime the New Year in. Pete suddenly tilted her chin and kissed her. Then he said huskily, "That's for better luck, Lina, in 1942."

He turned brusquely away and came toward the steps. She watched him. When Pete reached us, she must have seen Junior, because, with a sudden hysterical little cry, neither a laugh nor a sob, she turned and darted away.

A few days later a Wellington came in from Gibraltar, and one of her pilots was a man we had met in London, a friend of Jimmie Towers. He had news for us. Shortly after we had left England, she was caught in a raid and injured. She had been in the hospital ever since. Wires and cables and mail had never caught up with her. She had asked him to look us up and tell us she was well again, and that she hoped to be able to come to Malta—a had a plan for getting there.

I hurried back to Terra Kumbo and told Pete Steele.

"Stuff it, Hody," he said. "I know she's dead." He poured himself a long slug of whisky. "But even if she isn't, I don't belong to the lady. I'm just a no-good dog. I belong to the death squadron, Hody. And there's no use talking."

Nevertheless he tightened up when we heard, on a Tuesday night, that a convoy was definitely expected before Thursday dawn. Pete was on convoy patrol that dawn.

ONLY two ships had come through, and ten miles out of Valletta one of them suddenly drove right into a torpedo from an enemy submarine and foundered. Then out from Sicily the Luftwaffe roared for the final kill. The other ship steamed on, under our convoy patrol. Pete was certain that Jimmie was aboard.

"Don't let them get her, Hody!" he came in suddenly.

But when we intercepted the Luftwaffe a JU-88 broke through and shot down toward the ship. Pete cut away from formation and went down in a power dive on his tail. They fought it out until the bomber started to fall, and Pete's ship went slipping off with his engine burning.

"I got him, Hody!" Pete suddenly cut in.

It is a sickening thing to watch a plane going down, blazing and burning, with some one in it you know and love, and to be unable to help.

"Jump, Pete, jump!" I shouted.

But Pete didn't hear. I think a bullet had hit him and he was already dead. His plane crashed into the sea, burning. The bomber crashed too, but the pilot was floating down in a parachute. I started down with my finger on the button. Rags called me back sharply. I couldn't have hit that Nazi, anyway. I was blind with tears.

"Get on my tail," Rags said. "Let's get that Focke-Wulf up ahead. Are you with me?"

"With you, Rags," I said.

We got him. By this time the sun was starting to rise, and we saw a little sardine boat far below, making toward the spot where Pete had come down. Drifting toward it, in his rubber dinghy, was the Nazi pilot, the man Pete had given his life to trying to kill. And shooting down from the sky toward the little boat was a Focke-Wulf.

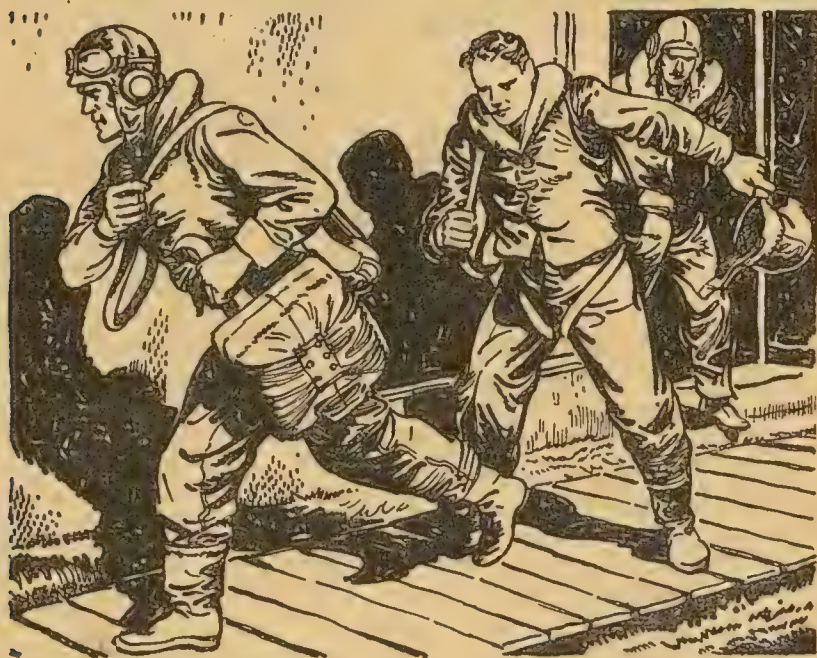
"It's Manoel and Lina in the boat," Matthews cut in. "I'm going to get this bloody killer."

Manoel tried to zigzag out of the way of the German bullets, but suddenly he slumped over the wheel, a bullet through his head. Matthews got the Focke-Wulf, but another German chased him toward shore. Matthews was hit, and crashed into the sea wall at Valletta, where his ship exploded and started to burn.

As the sun rose clear of the water, the Luftwaffe cut away and ran for Sicily. Rags and I drifted lower, toward

the boat. Lina had taken the tiller from Manoel's dead hands and was steering toward the German pilot whose bomber Pete had shot out of the sky. The little rubber dinghy bobbed and came against the side of the fishing boat. Dropping the tiller, Lina half rose as if to strike the Nazi whose chin was now thrust across the high sternboard. Then, as if realizing her helplessness, she returned to the tiller, breaking the other's hold and leaving him there as she steered toward Valletta.

That night late I was still awake. On Pete's bed table was a book, a pipe and tobacco pouch marking his place, and sleeping clothes on his turned-down bed. Charlie Grek must have forgotten, or not known, that Pete wouldn't be back. Jimmie Towers' picture gleamed in a light from the hall. Pete must have hung it so that in the middle of the night he might see her face. She was smiling



ing toward the empty bed. I felt like an intruder, as though somehow I were preventing his return.

Several nights later when I came upstairs a small square envelope from the wireless company was on the desk. I opened it hastily. It said:

PETE I WILL SEE YOU TOMORROW AND JUNIOR AND
HODY AND TEDFORD LOVE

It was signed by Jimmie Towers and it had come from Gibraltar.

When she stepped off a bomber at Luca Airdrome we didn't recognize her at first. She was thin and a few lines had begun to etch themselves in her face. But when she smiled she was the same as before, and she waved and came running up to us.

"It's me really," she said. "A bit disguised by the war, is all."

We made a great commotion about her luggage and about which one of us should sit next to her in the open carriage. But she had changed and we had changed.

"Where's Pete?" she said.

I mumbled a sort of double talk: "Later, Maxime's, a place down in Valletta, everybody meets there, after we get you a room at the hotel, meet there in the bar."

"Oh," she said. I guess she understood right then.

The breeze loosened a bit of her hair and she tucked it back. "Don't I look like a jigsaw puzzle, though! The lines, I mean."

Junior was sitting beside her, facing Tedford and me; he turned to her with a half-hearted grin.

"Don't hand us that stuff," he said. "Just watch our stock go up when we walk you into Maxime's."

"He's not kidding," I said. "You're lovely."

"Damn right," Tedford said.

Her hand trembled slightly as she tucked her compact away, but her eyes lightened. "Hody," she said, "if you'll just open that little tin case—"

The case was filled with soft pink and white things. I looked up hesitantly. "Maybe you'd better look," I said. "I don't want to mess up your things."

"A monk's in our midst," she laughed. "Go ahead." "You might at least tell me what I'm feeling around for."

"Some little flat bottles and a little round one," she said. "It was all I could bring on the plane."

There was a four-ounce bottle of gin for Junior, and one of bourbon for me, and one of scotch for Jimmie, and a little round bottle of port for Tedford, and a little flat bottle of Maryland rye—

I palmed the rye and slipped it into the pocket of my tunic. Jimmie flashed me a quick look of thanks. But I suppose that Junior and Tedford had seen. They tore open their gifts silently as I closed the case.

"Well," Tedford said, "happy days."

"Happy days," I said, looking at her. Her eyes wavered, and then they were bright again. "Happy days," she said.

We were all a bit high as we stopped at the hotel where she was going to stay. Ted and Junior let me help her out, and the Maltese driver with her luggage, and then I waited on the sidewalk while she went up to her room.

"She looks bad," Junior whispered. "I wouldn't tell her about Pete."

"She knows," Tedford said. "She knows."

We went to Maxime's and Tony bowed us into a dinner booth.

"He isn't here," Jimmie said. "Stop pretending, boys. I know Pete is gone."

TONY had beautiful steaks served to us, but nobody ate very much. We told her about the convoy and Pete as well as we could. But dinner ended in silence. Tedford and Junior excused themselves, which wasn't how it was planned at all.

"Hody," she said, "was he really in love with me?"

"Pretty damn much," I said.

She drank off her strega and got up. "Let's go," she said. "It's too noisy here."

I paid the bill and we left. Near her hotel we met a Maltese boy of four riding his tricycle.

"I got this from Uncle Charlie for Christmas," he said.

He showed us how it worked. He stood up on his pedals in ecstasy. "You work for my Uncle Charlie!" he yelled, clattering away. "You're a R. A. F."

"Oh," I said, "he must mean Charlie Grek, my batman."

Jimmie and I turned in at her hotel and went up to her room. In the dark hallway she fumbled with her key at the lock and it fell to the floor. As she stooped down her bit of a hat fell off and I picked it up with her key. I kissed the top of her head. Then I opened the door and we smiled at each other and went in.

She stood with her back against the wall, breathing hard, still smiling. The glimmer of starlight came in through the open windows, and a little breeze from the sea. She looked marvelously beautiful.

"Aren't you going to put on the light?" she said, low.

"No," I said, moving toward her. "Any objection?"

"I'd like a drink," she said nervously. "Put on the light and call room service."

"I can do better than that," I said. I pulled the little flat bottle of Maryland rye from my pocket and peeled off the cap. "This one is on Pete, I guess."

I held out the bottle. She hesitated.

"You weren't in love with the guy, were you?" I said.

She shook her head slowly. "No," she said.

She took the flask and went toward the window, where it was lighter; and she started to drink. But she suddenly turned and flung the bottle down onto the cobblestone street below, crumpling to the floor beside the open window, sobbing.

I fell to my knees beside her. Somehow I felt ashamed. Somebody down in the street called up.

"Not empty!" he said, waving the little bottle. "Thanks!"

Jimmie looked at me and we laughed. I gave her my handkerchief again and she leaned her head back against my shoulder and we sat there for a while looking down into the street. It was still early and the people were out strolling. I saw Rocky Main pass, on the far sidewalk, arm in arm with a girl. My arm tightened around Jimmie and she laughed nervously.

"You're a pretty direct sort of a guy, aren't you?"
 "I know what I want," I said.
 "I've never been with a man. . . . Do you believe that?"
 "Not even your husband?"
 "Not even him."
 "Your word goes," I said.
 She turned. Her lips were glistening like her eyes. I bent her head back and kissed her.
 "Listen," I whispered. "I wanted it to be like this in London, too."
 "So did I. So did I."
 "But because of Pete—"
 "Yes."

She suddenly smiled and thrust me away. I got to my



feet uncertainly, and she rose too, her fingers moving nervously across her jacket. I went over to the shadows on the far side of the bed. In a minute I could see the starlight glimmering on her fallen hair and her shoulders and her breasts. I tossed my tunic on the dresser.

"Hody," she said in a low voice. "I can't."

I went over to her. She was shivering, and her breast was throbbing heavily over her heart. Down in the street below the little boy was patrolling up and down and we could hear his high voice.

I said, "This is all a perfectly human and natural thing. I love you and you love me and it's kind of like a marriage night, in a way."

"Listen," she said.

I don't know whether she heard the sound of enemy planes first, or got the vibration of the air-raid alarm; but her body suddenly stiffened against me as the searchlights went on and illumined the room.

"Nothing to be afraid of," I said. "This hotel is built for eternity. Come on away from the window."

"No, Hody," she said. "I meant what I said. I can't. And they need us out there."

"Don't be silly. This town is organized for raids. Just keep out of the way and they'll thank you."

"But there's a child down there," she said, drawing on her skirt. "I'm going out and find him."

She stood in the doorway, fastening her jacket. I grabbed mine and followed her out. She threw a quick smile back at me and clattered down the stairs. Just as we ran across the lobby a terrific blast shook the air and the windows burst in on us. Jimmie flinched back and I grabbed her by the shoulders and shook her.

"Don't be a fool," I said.

She turned to me slowly.

"What's the matter?" she said. "Are you afraid?"

There was no answer to that one. The defense lights were flooding the streets and overhead the bombers and ack-ack and night fighters were barking and bombs were tumbling and bursting all around. A gang of firemen had just arrived and workers were beginning to chop their way through the rubble to people who were trapped. Jimmie pitched right in, alongside the Maltese, and one of them slapped a metal helmet on her head.

"Right about here, Hody," she said. "This was an area-way and that kid must have turned in here."

I helped her dig on down through the debris. We found what might have been a child.

"Listen," I said. "I doubt if it's the same kid, and as a matter of fact I even doubt it was a kid, anyhow. Come on, Jimmie."

"I'm sorry, Hody. Some other time. Tomorrow."

She pushed the helmet back on her head and held up her face so that I could wipe the sweat away from her eyes; then she kissed me quickly and was gone.

But I didn't see her the next day. The record runs:

Shot down by two Macchis who hit me from behind just as I was closing in on a bomber for a squirt. They used cannon shells and almost blew my ship out of the sky; it was riddled with holes. I was hit in the arms and legs by shrapnel. Gas began pouring out of my tank and I was afraid it would catch on fire. When I pancaked a wheel came off and I crashed.

I woke up in the hospital. They had pulled a couple of pounds of shrapnel out of my legs and arms. The doctor came along, a tall bald man named Canfield.

"Got a date in Valletta," I mumbled.

"You're in Valletta," he said. "Your date was last night, and she was here with a couple of boys called Junior and Ragbags and Don."

He held a hypodermic needle to the light and adjusted the plunger. When I woke up again, Jimmie was there.

"Hello," she said. "You're a difficult man to rouse."

"Consider me roused," I said. "Do I snore?"

"No, but you look pretty fierce when you sleep."

I started to wince. My shrapnel bites were beginning to itch and ache. I guess she must have noticed, because her eyes became moist and she came close.

"Poor old Hody," she whispered. "As soon as you're well . . ."

"Listen, lady," I said. "Don't hand me anything out of pity. I can get along all right on my own."

She didn't say anything. But she kissed me on the lips.

A FEW days later Dr. Canfield said I was healing up nicely. Hospital space was at a premium, so he moved me out to the rest camp at St. Paul's Bay, near the north-western end of the island. It was a quiet, lonely place, and I felt restless. I spent a lot of time in the bar. Dr. Canfield found me there when he came on a visit.

"How much longer do I have to stay here in exile?" I asked.

"That depends. How do you feel?"

"Still shaky in the legs," I admitted, "but restless as hell."

"Hold up your hand," I did. "Steady enough," he said. "Now, with a different stimulant." He smiled.

The next day Jimmie came out to St. Paul's Bay, in the afternoon; she brought along a picnic lunch.

"Hello, patient," she said. "Aren't you glad to see me?"

I said, "Listen, lady. Are you a prescription from Dr. Canfield?"

"Oh, don't be touchy," she said. "Come on. Let's go down to the beach while it's still nice."

It was a warm clear day and we climbed down the rocks and spread blankets on the sand. Jimmie undressed and ran down to the water.

"Last one in is a sissy!" she said.

I undressed and ran after her. My legs were still weak, but the water felt good and I was able to swim. Afterward we spread our picnic on the blanket, and there was a bottle of Gozo wine. While we ate, the sun went down. Then I caught her brown hands, and she leaned her cheek against mine. Her blue eyes were fixed on some distant point of the darkening sea and a strange little smile parted her lips.

She turned her face slowly as I gathered the blankets around us.

"What's the name of this place?"

"St. Paul's Bay," I said. "Why?"

"I just wanted to know. I want to remember." . . .

The next few days I tried to spend my time writing letters and reading, but I kept wandering down to the

bar. There was a phone just outside the door; whenever it rang, I hurried to answer it. At last one morning it was Jimmie. She was coming out that afternoon on the six o'clock bus.

At three o'clock there was an alert and at three-ten the sirens began sounding a raid over Valletta. I went down to the rocks at the bay, but it was too far away and the air was too misty to see what was going on. When the raid was over I went back to the bar.

"Give me a quick one, Mike," I said. "Double Irish."

"You're shaking like a leaf," he said. "They planted a couple of big ones that time. I was quaking myself."

At five there was another. I went out to the telephone and placed a call to Jimmie's hotel.

"There will be a slight delay on the lines," the Valletta central said.

I heard the crash of a bomb over the receiver, then a spluttering noise. After a second another operator came on. "Our Valletta switchboard is dead," she said. "We'll call you as soon as it is fixed. Forgive it, please."

As I went back to the bar the lights went out.

"Power plant gone," Mike said.

"What time does that bus usually come?"

"Before six."

It was ten past now. I tossed off my drink and tried the phone again; the line was still dead, and I went outside. The twilight was still gray and it was raining. I looked around for a bike; there wasn't any; so I turned up the collar of my tunic and started down the road to Valletta. And then Jimmie almost ran into me. She was on a bike, and she flashed a carbide lamp in my face and laughed.

"Well, imagine!" she said. "Now I suppose I'll have to ride you to St. Paul's Bay on my handlebars!"

I was so glad to see her I was angry.

"Damn it," I said, "haven't you got any more sense?"

"Than what, Hody?"

"Than coming out here like this."

"But the bus wasn't running because of the raid," she said. "And I promised to come, didn't I?" She put a foot on a pedal. "Maybe you don't appreciate me, mister. Maybe I ought to turn around and go back."

"Oh, the hell," I said, grinning. We were both soaking wet. "Let's get out of this rain."

At a farmhouse alongside the road, she leaned her bike against the wall and I knocked on the door. There was no answer and I turned the knob.

I struck a match and found an oil lamp. There was nobody home. Jimmie came in and stood shivering.

"Take off your wet clothes," I said. "I'm going to make a fire."

As the fire started to burn, Jimmie squatted down near it. She smiled up at me. "Get undressed too," she said. "You're soaking."

I took off my wet clothes and squatted beside her until I was warm. Then I went out to the kitchen and rummaged around.

"Hey, there's a stove going," I reported. "Soup and stuff." I carried the food in to her.

"This is perfect," she said. "I bet you planned it all."

"Just plain Coffin luck," I said.

WE finished our supper, and then I moved close to her. I buried my face in her warm hair. She reached up and touched my cheek with her hand, but she got up. She picked up the dishes and went out to the kitchen. There were no dish towels. She looked in the bedroom. "Hody!" she called.

I went in. She pointed to a bassinet made of hammered-out gasoline tins and a stack of baby things of Maltese lace. "We'd better go," she said. "They'll be back any minute."

"Not in the rain with a baby," I said.

We found some towels and went back to the kitchen. I kissed the nape of her neck.

"Jimmie."

"M-m."

"How would you like a little house like this?"

"Sometime."

"I mean," I said, "the whole thing complete."

"Oh, Hody, be practical," she said in a low voice. "You know what the situation is."

"That's just what I don't know." I caught her by the shoulders and drew her back toward me. "Listen. If other people can have it, what about us? Sometime we'll be dead. What about now?"

She turned away to the fire; she sat on the floor, her chin cupped on her knees, her eyes fixed on the coals.

"What do you want, Hody?" she said at last.

"The whole thing complete."

The corners of her eyes and mouth crinkled with laughter. "Does the whole thing include marriage?"

"That's the general idea. Will you get a divorce?"

Her laughter died away and she was silent.

"Or maybe you don't want to," I said. "Maybe you've just been kidding me along, like you did with Pete."

I was sorry the minute I said it. She started to cry, silently. I put my arms around her clumsily.

"Please, Jimmie," I said. "I didn't mean to say that. It's just that I'm out of my mind about you." I wiped her tears away. "Tell you what. I'll do what old Pete wanted to do. I'll fly out to Cairo on a Wellington bomber. And I'll corner that ratty husband of yours and I'll bring you back a divorce on a platter, baby."

"He isn't out there, Hody," she said in a low voice. "He's here at Malta."

I felt cold all over. "Is that why you came?"

"I didn't know he was here," she said. "He's changed his name."

"What name does he go by?"

"Don't ask me, Hody. Please. I'll have to work this out by myself."

I said stiffly, "I thought when people were in love they put all their cards on the table."

"I made a promise," she said miserably, "before I met you, to give him a chance. To let things ride for the duration."

"I see," I said. "Then we're right back where we began."

She put her arms around my neck quickly.

"No, we're not," she said, "believe me. I want the whole thing complete. With you and nobody else. I'll talk to him. He'll understand."

"And if he doesn't?"

"I'll break my promise."

IT was dawn when I woke. I went out to the kitchen and hunted for tea. When I came back, Jimmie sat up with a start, looking at the gray windowpane.

"Oh, dear," she said, "dawn!"

"And not a spot of tea in the house." I pulled her out of bed. "Back to the wars, lady. It's going on seven. The bus just went up to the Bay."

She hurried to get dressed. "Nobody came home."

"They forgot," I said. "Or maybe the place is in escrow."

"Where's escrow?"

I buttoned my tunic.

"Escrow," I said, "is where you are when you're not very sure where you are."

"Well, my goodness," she said, with a little sidewise smile, "are you still in escrow?"

"Not after last night."

"Neither am I," she said.

She kissed me and ran outside. Her bus was coming. She flagged it while I trundled her bike out.

"Don't forget to put back all the things that we used," she said. "Before the people come home."

I looked at their mailbox. "The Dominic Russo people," I said. "I won't."

The bus roared away toward Valletta. I walked back to St. Paul's Bay, whistling at the birds. I slept until noon. The doctor came while I was dressing. He checked me over carefully.

"H'm!" he said. "Get dressed and I'll buy you a drink."

"Well," I said, when I got down to the bar, "what's the verdict?"

He looked at me blankly. "You're all right. I thought I told you." He ran a hand over his bald head. "We had a bombing last night," he said. "They knocked off a corner of our hospital."

My muscles tightened. "Any killed?"

"Ten," he said. "I'm glad that you're going back into the air."

"So am I, brother," I said. "So am I."

After lunch I packed my things while Canfield made his rounds. Then I went to the kitchen and bought all the tinned foods they could spare, and sneaked a sackful of charcoal when nobody was watching. I took everything out to Canfield's car and waited for him.

On the way to Valletta, I asked him to stop at the little house where Jimmie and I had sheltered. It was just the way we had left it. I carried the food out to the kitchen, and then I laid a fire with the charcoal. The little house looked merry in the sunlight. I closed the door enviously.

"You're a lucky stiff, mister," I said.

When I got back to the car, Dr. Canfield was squinting at the mailbox at the side of the road.

"The name is Dominic Russo," I said.

He put the car into gear. "His wife had a baby last night. They were three of the ten people killed."

I looked back. Birds flashed back and forth over the road. But the little house was out of sight. I was glad when we got to Terra Kumbo.

"I HEAR you get beefsteaks every day at the Bay," Junior said. I was buying the drinks before dinner. "Great big juicy ones."

"Mama!" he said. "Crack me down!"

Tedford spoke up sharply. "Cut the comedy, Junior."

Junior opened his eyes wide.

"Honest, mister, I didn't mean it," he said. "Just I'm crazy for a good piece of meat."

Tedford shared the room with me now. When we were turning in that night, I said, "I hear you got three more planes, Ted."

"You've been listening to Junior," he said. "Two of them were just probables. He got one himself." He finished brushing his hair. "But I don't like the way he jokes about cracking up for a beefsteak."

"Forget it, Ted," I said. "When a man talks like that he means something else. He means a little house. Good food on the fire. A good wife and a baby and all the rest."

Ted laughed tightly. "Beefsteak in the sky. It's not for us. Hody, we're caught in a different sort of mill than you think. Not love, but history."

"So what?" I said sharply. "You used to be in love with a girl named Kay. Or was that just ancient history, too?"

"I'm still in love with her," he said quietly. "I think of her every time I go up there. She'd have liked Matthews and he'd have liked her. We all liked the little things you were talking about. But it's all gone now."

"It will all come again, Ted," I said. "Maybe better than before."

"I hope so. I sure hope so. But we'll never know, Hody. It's all after our time."

It was still dark when Charlie Grek shook us. "Dawn alert," he said. "Snap in."

Tedford was in a good mood; I was feeling a little depressed. At the dispersal hut we watched Rags marking up the assignments. Ted drew White One; his wingman was young Orth.

"New Tailass Charlie," I said.

"Orth?" said Rags. "He hasn't been much good since he bagged his twelfth ship. Ted has been going along steady and they seem to get on well together."

"I don't see my name on the board," I said.

"Sure you want to try it again?"

"Damn it, Rags, I'm all right," I said. "What's the matter, don't you trust me?"

He chalked in my name: Red Two.

"Does that suit you?" he said. "Right on my own tail."

The phone rang. We all froze while Rags answered.

"Orth, Fighter Control," the voice rasped in the receiver. "Enemy plot of twenty plus is intercepting a convoy and patrol. Assist."

Rags slammed down the receiver. "Scramble!" he shouted. But we were already running out of the dispersal hut and across the airdrome.

When it was over and I came in, Reed met me and helped me out of my harness.

"What luck, sir?"

"Lost Rocky Main," I said. "And four boys from Hal Far. Plus three tankers and one of the greatest destroyers that ever went down fighting. But we knocked down four of their bombers and the Hal Far squadron got six of their

fighters. And we've got a freighter coming through."

"Oh, we'll do, sir," Reed said. "I never doubted."

The little freighter came limping into Valletta about five thirty that afternoon. I met Jimmie and we watched.

"It's a hell of a cost to bring one tramp steamer to port," I said as we were having dinner at Maxime's.

"Hody," she said, "it gives everybody a lift to know that convoys are still trying to come through."

"I don't notice anybody being exactly hilarious."

"Don't expect brass bands and ovations when one little ship with a few tons of food comes in."

"Ha!" I said. "Just a minute ago you were making a mountain out of that one little ship."

She smiled and stood up. "Let's dance."

"Woman," I said, "you're being evasive again. I back you into a corner and your only answer is sex."

She smiled. "I think sex is kind of nice, in a way."

"M'm," I said, smelling her hair, "so do I."

When we left Maxime's the stars were shining. We passed a long silent line of people waiting outside a ration center for whatever food might have come in on the freighter. As we went through the deserted streets toward Jimmie's hotel, an alert sounded and the sirens began. I grabbed Jimmie's arm and started to run for it, but she drew me in a different direction. Suddenly she pulled me down a ramp leading into the rock.

"I forgot to tell you," she said, "I'm a shelter warden. This is my station."

The people swarmed past us down the ramp, women carrying babies, men and children carrying blankets and chairs; and the deeper we went the thicker the air became. We came into a long wide tunnel lit by flickering electric bulbs; perhaps the tunnel ran down somewhere to the sea, because when the earth jarred as the bombs began falling a sudden gust of salt air came swirling through and the floor was damp.

She kissed me quickly. "Don't get lost. I'll be back. This is my section."

AFTER a time I saw her making her way back with a girl. It was Lina Grek. All the cheap make-up she had been wearing the last time I saw her was gone; and the same serene and wondering expression that had first caught our eyes in the cathedral was back.

"Hello, Lina," I said.

"Oh, you know each other."

"Yes," Lina said.

She was obviously uncomfortable, and Jimmie dispatched her on an errand.

"That's Junior's girl, isn't it?" she said after Lina left.

"Junior's and Pete's."

"Whose baby is it?"

"I don't know," I said. "She's been everybody's, I guess."

"She's lovely."

"Yes, she's lovely. So are you."

She flashed me a little smile. "Hody, isn't there some way we could bring those kids together again?"

"Why, yes, I guess so," I said—"Lady Lovelorn."

"Quiet, you!" she said, laughing.

A short time later the all-clear sounded and we all went back to the fresh starlit air above.

"Race you home," I said.

"Whose home?"

"Yours," I said. "I'm foreclosing the mortgage." There was something I had to know.

"What about Towers?" I asked, when we were in her room. "Have you seen him yet?"

"Not yet."

"Why not?"

She drew herself gently out of my arms and went to sit on the window ledge, framed against the stars. She suddenly started to cry. It was like a long time ago, another night, and I went over to her.

"I failed the guy," she said. "I failed him like Pete. I want to be straight with you, Hody. I don't want it to be like that with us."

"It won't be, baby. Don't worry." I picked her up. Slowly she relaxed in my arms.

"I'll square it all up," she whispered. "You know why?" Her arms crept up around my neck. "Because I love you."

That was the last time I saw Jimmie until Good Friday,

Tedford's birthday. We used the occasion to bring Lina and Junior together. But, in the meantime fifteen Spitfires had flown in from an American carrier, the Wasp, and a few days later a convoy of six ships came through. Going down to Valletta that night, even Tedford was gay. We stopped in Mosta for a few drinks, and we all sang in the bus.

Jimmie was at Maxime's, with Lina. Junior was properly surprised. But so was I, because Rags was there, too. He jumped up and smiled all around.

"Family occasion, I suppose," he said. "Americans out for hot cross buns and all that. So I'll just shake along."

He seemed nervous; I pressed him to stay.

"Stick around, Rags. Have some fun."

He eyed me quietly. "O. K., boy; I'll do that."

When I danced with Jimmie, I dug my fingers into her back.

"Is Rags Towers?" I said.

"The direct approach," she murmured.

I dug my fingers in harder. "Is he?"

She stopped still on the floor. "No, you blithering idiot," she said. "Is this a dance or a fight?"

"O. K., don't get excited," I said. I caught her and started dancing again. "Tell me this. Have you seen him?"

"Yes."

She wouldn't say any more. I spun her around on the floor and almost knocked down Junior and Lina.

Jimmie steered me back to the table. "You're drunk."

"Damn right. I don't care who Towers is."

The rest of the evening was fine, but it was too short. At ten thirty Rags got up to go.

"I'll take you home," Junior said to Lina.

Ted and I took Jimmie to her hotel, and then Ted stopped in at a wireless office. "Just be a minute, Hody." The clock ticked on for half an hour while he worked on a wire to Kay. The finished version read, "Love." He smiled sheepishly as he filed it.

AT four thirty on Easter morning we went over to Mosta. Father Osta had moved back the sunrise service an hour, in case the bombers came at dawn. People were packed into the cathedral when we got there, and the mass had already begun. We stood just inside the doors, Junior and Ted and Rags and myself.

Presently Lina entered timidly, blessing herself, and tiptoed down the aisle to where the Greks were seated. There she hesitated. Marie turned. Slowly she smiled, and then tears began to roll down her face. She drew Lina toward her, and the girl suddenly fell on her knees among her people. Father Osta was speaking.

The sound of raid sirens came from Valletta. The priest raised his voice. Somewhere a bomb thudded down and the earth shuddered.

"For we are His children, and we too shall rise up again," said Father Osta. "We shall say with Him, 'For I am the life and the resurrection—'"

The people spoke up mightily.

"For I am the life and the resurrection—"

Another bomb crashed, closer by.

"Scramble," Rags whispered. "I have a feeling there's a big day ahead."

He was right. The Luftwaffe was launching a gigantic air offensive against Malta that lasted for nearly one hundred days. That day we had ten raids, each with an average of two hundred enemy planes. The cathedral was bombed at about eleven o'clock, about the right time for High Mass. But there were no worshipers in the church. Father Osta had locked it after the Easter Mass. His body was found later under the ruins.

I went on observation duty with Joe Crichton in the Palace Tower in Valletta. The Nazis kept rolling in over us, dropping bigger and heavier bombs. One landed less than a hundred yards from us; the tower seemed to leap under our feet. But as the dust settled, we could see that the bomber had crashed, riddled by ack-ack.

"Yow!" I called into my transmitter. "Station Two, calling Control!"

Orth's voice came in from somewhere deep in the rock.

"Control."

"Another 88," I said. "Ack-ack."

He said, after a moment, "Is Gerry upstairs?"

"Yes," I said, "somewhere. It's hard to see in this muck. But our boys are doing all right."

"I hope so." His voice sounded weary. "Coffin?"

The personal touch was surprising. "Yes, Captain Orth."

"I— Oh, damn it, nothing." He clicked off.

Then I heard Rags: "Red One, calling White One."

Tedford came in clear as life: "White One."

"Where the hell are you?" Rags came back.

"White Two and I are trying to waltz our way out of a Nazi escort en route to Sicily. I'm not sure where we are because my instrument panel is dead."

"Fight 'em off, Whites," Rags said. "Good luck!"

The air was quiet a moment; and then young Orth came in.

"White Two," he said, "calling Control."

"Control," said Orth. "What is it?"

"Father," Gerald shouted, "I'm on the tail of a 109!"

"Get back to your post, Gerald!" Orth said sharply. "White Two!"

"But it's going to be thirteen!"

"Thirteen be damned!" Orth said. "Are you crazy?"

"I got him, father! He's gone!"

"Cut out," Orth said. "Gerald!"

There was a moment of silence. Gerald's voice came in faintly: "Yes, dad. They got me. I can't see."

"All right, boy," Orth said huskily. "Cut your R. T."

"But I'm blind. They broke the glycol line in my face."

"I understand, boy. Cut out. Other men need the air."

"No!" young Orth screamed. "No! Help me in. I did it for you. Fly me in blind, dad. I can make it."

Orth's voice was terrible to hear: "Good luck, Gerald. I'm sorry. Good-by."

A pistol shot came over the receiver, and then a sputtering sound as a ship crashed in the sea.

"White Two?" A different voice came on from Control.

White Two didn't answer; but Tedford came in.

"White One," he said, breathing hard. "Been trying to get you. Wounded and bailing."

"Where?"

But there wasn't an answer.

I stripped the earphones from my head and handed them to Joe. I went down from the tower and ran toward



Takali. Nobody ever blamed me for leaving my post of duty that day. At Takali I got a plane into the air that was no good for fighting but would do for patrol, and I went looking for Tedford. I searched the sea until dark. But I found no signs of life.

After I came in to the airdrome and dispersed my plane, I started to climb the dark hill toward Terra Kumbo, but found myself turning aside down the slope toward Valletta.

"Tedford." I said. "Tedford—"

Jimmie was not at her hotel; she was at the hospital. She met me at the door of a room. Orth was inside.

"He is still alive," she said. "He is paralyzed, but they think he will live." And then suddenly I knew who Towers was. And it didn't seem to matter any more.

For nearly a hundred days the body of Group Captain Orth lingered on, and Valletta and the harbor suburbs were leveled under a steady rain of bombs. Jimmie's hotel was bombed out and she lived in the tunnel shelter.

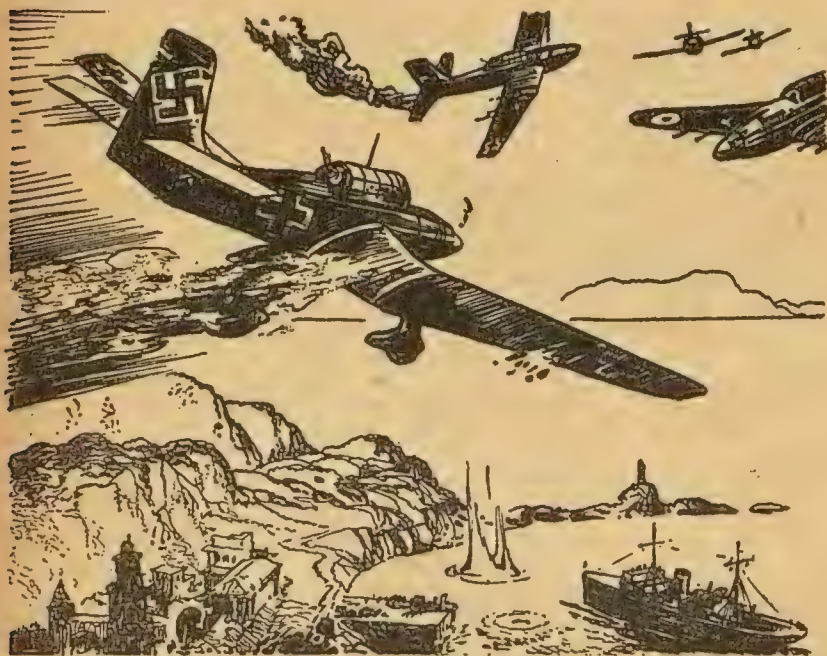
"Let's not go anywhere for a drink," she said, one night. "Let's just walk a little."

We came to the Palace Square. The ancient building had been bombed a few days after Easter Sunday. Jimmie sat down on a broken stone. I sat down beside her.

"I lied to you about Orth," she said. "I knew he was here all the time—all the time since London."

"Then why did you come here?" I said.

"Because I was wrong," she said—"wrong from the very



beginning. His wife was killed in a raid and my people lost on the Athenia, and I guess we were both trying to drink the past under the table when we met. He was trying to be young and I was trying to be old. And then, the night we were married, he was sent on a mission over the Continent, and he made that mistake. I left him when he came back and the trouble began. People said that he lost all those men to save his own life. He was cleared of all those charges, but I never cleared him myself, because I had no faith or love but only a contemptuous kind of pity, I guess. He wanted a chance, and I let him go away like that because I was ashamed for him. I changed my name to Towers, and then I invented stories about who he was and where he had gone."

There were tears in her eyes.

"Then you left London and I began to grow up," she said. "I knew I was wrong to let Pete go with the feeling he had. But I didn't know what to do. I was in love with you back even then, I think. I kept thinking about you all the time. About you and about Pete and Orth, here at Malta. Let them all get together, I used to think. Let them meet and find out what kind of a girl I am. Then they will forget all about me and it will be better. Then I was hurt, and in the hospital I thought everything over. I knew I had to come out to Malta and face things. I meant to give Orth a real chance—but instead I fell in love with you for sure. I told him about us in Maxime's that night just before you all came down. Rags was with us. He'd been our best man."

"'Good man, Coffin,' Rags said, 'but he's been falling off a bit since Jimmie's been here.' That must have decided Orth, because he stood up with a weary smile."

"'Righto, Rags.' He turned to me. 'Cheero, Jimmie.'"

"When he walked away from the table I knew that he had traded his own chance for ours. He turned back as though he wanted to say something more, and then I guess he heard you and the others coming. You were kind of high, singing, you know?"

"That was the last time I saw him," she whispered. "To talk to, I mean. When I saw him, he just smiled at me. As if he understood and didn't mind any more. But I guess he already knew what he was going to do, and was just waiting for a sign of some kind. And then White Two gave him the sign."

She buried her face against my shoulder.

"It's as though I murdered him, Hody," she said in a low voice. "As though I might have done something for him to make it different."

She started to sob convulsively, and I put my arms tight around her and let her cry. After she was quiet again, we sat just quiet with the touch of each other. It was nearly midnight when I took her down into the tunnel where she had a folding cot and her duffel.

There was no place for us to go and just be happy, and there seemed no respite anywhere in the world, in those days of 1942. Rommel started a drive toward Cairo. Bataan was lost, and Wake Island met its doom. The rocks of Malta continued to crumble under the iron rain, but the people lived in the dark, unyielding. Our ammunition ran so low that half of our ack-ack guns were silent; and our fuel supply reached the point where we began to service our planes by hand.

Then one day some new Spitfires arrived. It was Junior's twentieth birthday, and he was excited as a kid because we had a little party on for him at Marie's. From the time Charlie Grek woke us up, he was high. He had moved in with me after Tedford was lost.

"Listen, Charlie," he said. "I'll be calling you uncle before the year is over. Want to make a bet?"

Charlie grinned. "Telling me!" he said. "Ho-ho-ho!"

"Seriously, Eddie," I said when Charlie had gone laughing away. "You mean you want to marry Lina?"

"I'd like to know why not," he shot back. "She had a little wild oats and now it's over. I'm not so pure myself, and I guess none of us are. She's real people down underneath, Hody. That's all that counts."

I felt ashamed. I turned away from the mirror and sat down for a moment on the side of his rumpled bed.

"Listen, son," I said. "I sure as hell hope you make it, kid. You deserved the best, Eddie, and I hope it's all marked with your name."

THAT night at the party Lina gave him a St. Christopher medal to keep him from harm in the air. Junior's eyes filled with tears. "Gee," he said, "I don't deserve nothing like this."

"Only on your twentieth birthday," said Ragbags, winking at Lina. "When you get to be twenty-one, boy, you'll have to take it like a man."

Midsummer came. One day, after the Luftwaffe had thrown a heavy blitz of ships across our skies, I came home to Terra Kumbo for lunch, and found the entire front of the building gone. There was nobody in the kitchen. I ran upstairs, calling, but nobody answered.

Eddie had left a note on the desk:

Dear Hody: We are all on a twenty-four-hour leave as of this A. M. and I am a louse on the loose. Wahoo! Join me soon, pappy, in Valletta. EDDIE.

I doused myself with cold water and changed into some fresh blues. The door opened and a gust of wind lifted Eddie's note from the desk and carried it out the window. Rags had come into the room. He sat on the bed.

"Going somewhere?" He looked very tired.

"Down to Valletta," I said. "Got a date with Junior. And when that little guy gets a head start he's a hard man to catch up with."

"You won't do any catching up, Hody," he said quietly. "Junior went for a Burton this morning."

I was just fixing my tie. "That can't be," I said.

Bees were humming on the flowering vines just outside the window. I walked over there and looked down.

"There it is—a note from Eddie," I said, turning back. "Cut the kidding, Ragbags. He's down in Valletta."

He just smiled his tired sad smile. I sat down on Junior's rumpled bed.

"Six of them, Hody," he said quietly. He told me they were standing around at the door. It was a fine morning and they had a whole day ahead of them and they were kidding and laughing. They waited for Junior while he ran upstairs and wrote me a note.

"They were just leaving when it came," Rags said. "Half a ton of it, maybe more. A thousand pounds of powder and steel against a thousand pounds of flesh."

We held the funeral that afternoon. Rags read a short

English burial service, and then he spoke a few words. I saw Lina, crying softly, holding Charlie Grek's arm. For a moment I couldn't speak. And then I saw Eddie, as though he was standing there, with his cap on the side of his curly hair and a cocky little smile, waiting. And I said a few words.

"Eddie was American," I said, "as American as a chip-on-the-shoulder when a big guy starts trying to push the world all around. They never could beat him. He was the biggest little kid in the world. And I think he'll be cheering when we trim those Nazi swine down to a human size. Eddie and all the big little people all over the world."

The earth rattled down into the graves. Lina was sobbing quietly. I walked over to where she was.

We walked slowly because she was heavy with child and crying so that I had to lead her carefully around the shrapnel holes in the road.

"Please come in," she said. "I'd like you to."

IT was growing dark and she lit a candle when we entered the tool shed. She brought some bread and cheese and a bottle of wine. We ate in silence. Then she beckoned for me to follow her into the wine room. She stood there holding the candle and smiling. In the center of the room was a bassinet made out of empty five-gallon tins, and heaped with delicate things of Maltese lace.

"Eddie made it. From the airdrome," she said softly, as though in wonder, "from the tins that gave him fuel to fly with. He brought them here and made it."

"So you see," she said, when we had gone back and sat down, "I am not alone here."

The same little mysterious smile was on her lips that we had first noticed one night in the cathedral long ago.

"It was not his baby," she said, "but he wanted it." I could feel her effort to find the words for what she wanted to say. "Do you think he would mind if I called our baby by his name?"

She looked up at me with a shy smile.

"I think he would be proud and happy, Lina," I said. "I think we all would."

"Thank you," she said. "I too will be happy and proud."

Her eyes closed and she nodded sleepily. I tiptoed away.

Orth died that night. It was as though he knew, somewhere in the tomb of his body where the life had continued, that new life was shaping to take its place. The knowledge was everywhere. It was in the defenders of Stalingrad and in the men at Guadalcanal and in the army facing Rommel at El Alamein. The tide of death had reached its full and now it was beginning to ebb back on its makers.

On a warm clear day in the Indian summer that had come after a few foreshadowing days of the rain and winter to follow, Jimmie and I took a picnic lunch out into the country.

We were happy that September afternoon; we were happy being together and planning the family we'd have—"The whole thing complete, Hody—remember?" she said. We were happier than I ever was, even while the clouds came rolling down from the north—happier than I ever will be again. I remember when the first drops of rain splashed down on her face like tears. At first we didn't notice. And then there was a heavy rumble and the earth seemed to shake. We sat up.

"Thunder," I said. "Just thunder this time."

We both laughed. I pulled Jimmie to her feet. We ran along the road toward Mosta. Lightning flashed and thunder roared and the rain came pouring down. Jimmie pointed up the slope toward a terrace. There was a grape arbor, and some buildings beyond, and we ran to them.

"Whew!" Jimmie said. "I'm drenched."

Then I saw that we were sheltered under the arbor of grapes where the Greks had lived. The two little out-buildings were dark.

"Goodness, Hody," Jimmie said, "you look as if you just saw a ghost."

I opened the doors of the little buildings; there was nobody around. I went back to the terrace.

"Nothing," I said. "Nobody home. Let's just wait under the grapes and the storm will clear soon."

We stood close together.

I think we both heard a cry at the same time; we both turned; and in a bright flash we saw Lina clinging to the door of the wine room. She had come home to the borning-place of her people.

Jimmie looked at me. "It's her time, Hody," she said. "Go call the doctor. We've got to get her down to the hospital."

I ran for a telephone. I got Canfield at last; he promised to send an ambulance right away. I was sweating when I went out in the rain again. There was a blinding flash and a roar. I stood still, with the storm pouring down. I thought I heard the sound of a plane. I thought the flash and the roar was a bomb. But all I could hear was the storm again. I laughed at my fears and ran back toward the Grek place. It seemed the way I had left it.

"Dr. Coffin reporting," I called, as I shook off the rain at the door. "Ambulance on the way. Canfield too."

Then I saw them; and I smelled powder; and I saw that the gray rain was beating down into the room.

I ran forward and picked her up and cradled her head in my arms. "Jimmie, Jimmie!"

I looked up through the broken roof. He must have been coming from Libya through the storm, and perhaps flying blind, and perhaps he had dropped his bombs to lessen his danger and lighten his load.

"Please, Jimmie," I said. "Please!"

She sighed contentedly in my arms. But she was shot through with shrapnel. She had shielded Lina when the bomb fell and burst. The steel skin of the thing had broken and riddled Eddie's little bassinet like a tin toy, and it had lodged deep in the warm and helpless flesh of her as she tried to cover Lina from harm. But the ambulance came and I thought they were safe.

Lina died on the way to Valletta. "Heart gone," Canfield said. "Shock."

I held Jimmie's head in my arms. "Jimmie, Jimmie," I whispered.

SHE opened her eyes and smiled a little, peacefully, and then she closed them again. She was getting white and cold when Canfield laid her out on a cot near the operating table where Lina was lying. He took a bright silver needle and he jabbed it into her whitening arm. The color came back slowly and faintly to her face. He turned away brusquely to Lina. "Caesarean," he said to a nurse. "We can try."

Jimmie's eyes fluttered open after a long time. She saw me and smiled.

Dr. Canfield stepped back, and there was something small dangling from his hand, and he slapped it and it started to cry.

Jimmie smiled faintly. "What is it?" she said.

"A boy," I said. "Name of Eddie."

She smiled again and her eyes closed sleepily. The baby was crying convulsively. Jimmie moved her lips, and I leaned down and brushed them with mine. She seemed to be growing whiter and colder again. But she stirred when I pressed my face in her hair.

"It was too much to hope for ourselves, Hody. It was for other people, I think."

Then she seemed to fall asleep. I looked up as a shadow crossed her face, and I saw Canfield there.

"O. K., magician," I said. "Do something for us now."

He reached down. "I thought so," he said. "She's dead."

At first I hated Lina's baby the way a man who loves a woman might hate the child whose birth costs her life. But after a while I remembered what she said: "It was too much to hope for ourselves. It was for others, I think."

After I remembered that I began to feel as if the baby was ours. We all wanted to adopt it, Rags and Andy and I, but Charlie Grek had a case. It was the last Grek on the island except himself. He adopted the baby—name of Eddie Grek, by the way—but he let us be godfathers.

The day the baby was christened, the four of us drank four bottles of brandy Marie had made and saved for such an occasion. It was the night before I was leaving the island. All our Hurricanes were gone, and Rags and Andy were leaving soon for the Middle East.

I had been down at the quartermaster depot at Valletta all day going through the great piles of duffel to locate the bags that had belonged to our boys, and I was feel-

ing a bit shaky. On the way back home I stopped to tell Tommy Reed good-by and good luck.

When he noticed my sleeve, where my stripe had just been widened with a thread of blue through the middle, he grinned. "Flying Officer Coffin," he said. "How's that?"

"Sergeant Reed," I said, "thanks, and good-by—sir."

His lips twisted down at the corners, but he smiled and he grabbed my hand.

"O. K., boy," he said. "Good flying!"

I went back to Terra Kumbo, which had gone through a remodeling after the bombing, and I packed my things. When the time came to put Jimmie's picture in my duffel, I couldn't go on. I stood there looking at it.

Rags came quietly into the room and sat down on the bed.

"I was in love with her myself," he said. "I suppose you knew that."

I didn't say anything; there was nothing to say.

"Yes," he said quietly. "That's how it was. I was their friend, and I was with Orth that night over the Continent. And when he was in trouble, she came to me. They were saying that he lost those men to save his own life, and she wanted to know."

He looked down at his hands, and they were closed, and he opened them slowly.

"I told her the truth," he said. "It was a pretty cruel thing to do. I lied to the inquiry board later; she made me promise to get him a new chance, and I did. Later Orth told me that she believed she had brought him trouble by taking his name; she wanted to change the taboo. Jimmie had a lot of funny little superstitions, maybe from her Welsh childhood. She created a fictitious person called Towers to take the burden of blame and guilt away from Orth, and in time she came to believe it, that he was a brave splendid man once again. And so he was, in a way, at the end. He wasn't afraid to die, and to let his son die, to save other lives. Just as she did herself."

"That isn't how she told me," I said. "Not quite."

Rags looked up with a slow smile.

"Jimmie never quite told the truth," he said, "because she believed that the truth was never quite finished."

He got up and put his hand on my shoulder.

"The truth is, she was right," he said. He gripped my hand.

"And now good-by," he said, "because I think when you go tomorrow you'd rather go as you came. As though we might still be meeting again, all of us somewhere, for the first time."

THE END

BOOKS IN REVIEW

By E. A. PILLER

LAST year, you remember, War and Peace leaped back into the best-seller lists after being relegated to the classics (appreciated but unread) for decades. Readers found a hopeful parallel in Tolstoy's account of how Napoleon's army went reeling back from Moscow. There, we enjoyed thinking, is what will happen to Hitler.

This year the parallel is brought more sharply into focus by a spectacular first novel called *Retreat from Rostov*, by Paul Hughes. It tells, among other things, the tremendous story of how a mightier machine than Napoleon's, the most nearly irresistible army in history, ground its way inexorably up to the gates of Rostov, how it stalled there



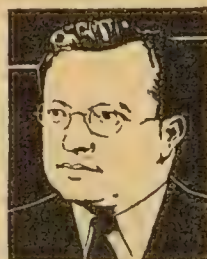
Paul
Hughes

against the rock of Russian resistance, and then, in a final desperate display of strength, swept into the city.

The Russian Army temporarily retreated. But the citizens of Rostov fought on and initiated the disintegration which finally encompassed the German Army when Timoshenko's forces struck

again. The German Army suffered its first defeat in World War II and the course of history was changed.

Around this central theme Paul Hughes has written by far the best novel of this war to date.



Joseph
Rosenfarb

Among the characters who will most concern the reader are Peter Terenski, a captain in the Russian cavalry, and his wife, Kaaron. As the fight for Rostov begins, Peter is concerned about his wife's interest in Josef Balenkov, a young musician whose greatest hope is that some day he will play the organ in the cathedral. When Rostov is captured, Kaaron becomes one of the most implacable of guerrilla fighters and Josef achieves his ambition in a way that serves Russia and costs him his life.

There is Boris Guidenny, tireless, fearless leader of guerrillas, a Russian colonel who is a spy, Bess Elsenburg and Roger Dameron, American war correspondents, in love with each other, thrown together in Rostov only to be separated afterward.

On the German side we meet

Colonel Adrian Pfeiffer, aesthete, philosopher, and cruel keen fighter, Gruska, a Polish girl whom he first made a harlot and then his mistress, and various other members of the Wehrmacht.

And this is only the beginning; for the book is rich in both characters and incident. Occasionally a character or a bit of dialogue is a trifle wooden, but the incidents are uniformly good and exciting and the whole has the true touch of authenticity. You will read it with mounting excitement, and having read it you will probably find a new urgency about and almost a sense of participation in the war's headlines.

A SLIM but potent book is *Highway to Tokyo*, by Joseph Rosenfarb. It examines every possible route for a conquest of Japan, considers the weapons we have (or will soon have) for the job, the global task we have on our hands while doing it, and reasons that the approach from the south, utilizing islands for land-based planes, is the logical one.

This will require the retaking of the Philippines as a base of operations. For the most part, as you see, this buttresses the present reasoning of the Allied High Command; but its lucid, clear-cut conception and presentation of the facts which point to the soundness of this strategy make it "must" reading—and incidentally, heartening.

Keep up *your* war production every day!



It's not easy to be on your job every minute
of every working day *But do your best.*

Victory depends on everyone, every day!

Remember: Every minute counts.



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lass," he said kindly. "Mr. Benham!" He moved to the door.

Lucy sat still and she listened. Pete Benham's voice reached her through the rumble of the ship.

"It's understandable, sir," he said. "I had intended to go in for medicine. The poor girl was upset. Why not? Delicate-looking little thing. Her ship left behind, a sitting duck, when the engines quit. She climbed into that life-saving suit—her uniform under it. Finally she got to sleep."

"Aye—and then?" said the captain.

"Has a terrible nightmare. Starts up, out the door, up on deck—makes a jump for the boat—and goes overboard. Then mixes up the dream and reality in the terror of being adrift."

Lucy turned her eyes and caught Benham making a slight gesture—a detestable "Elementary, my dear Watson" sort of gesture.

A rush of blood pulsed through her. For the first time since she had awakened she felt like herself, like Lucy Oliver. She felt fine.

"Why, that impertinent would-be quack medico!" she whispered furiously. "Delicate-looking little thing! I'll—" She forced herself back into her chair. "I'll make him grovel!"

"Aye," said the captain. "Take my cabin, Benham. She'll be safer sleeping down here in yours where the steward can keep an eye on her—for more dreams."

Captain MacCrummond ascended the ladder. Pete Benham came back

into the wardroom. He smiled at her. He was sorry for her! The big supercilious squip! No tactics could be too ruthless, no deal too raw, to cure a young man like that of his coldssal ego. Hysterical, was she? She felt enormously well.

"Please, Mr. Benham," she said faintly, looking at him from under lowered lids. "Could—would you mind helping me along to—to my room? I—I'm feeling dizzy."

Pete Benham looked startled. Before he could move, the steward popped out.

"'Askell will tyke care o' you, miss," the steward soothed. "Lord love you, lydy, 'Askell was a first-class steward in the North Atlantic run before them Jerries acted up. English, I am. Lean on me, miss; I won't let this corvette throw you."

Pete Benham followed down the corridor, and towered at the door of his stateroom while the steward tucked her in.

"A little food is indicated, Haskell," he said.

More of his medical mumbo-jumbo! Would it be worth while to ask Haskell privately if there were such a thing as a lipstick in this bouncing little man-of-war?

"Where's your home?" Pete Benham asked.

"Detroit."

"Detroit!" He was pleased. "I was born in Ontario, across the river from Detroit. We're practically neighbors. Try to rest."

He walked away before she could

think of anything alluring in reply. She ignored his departure and picked at the light still taped to her wrist.

"Ere, I'll take it off," said Haskell. "Mr. Benham's idea, that was! 'It'll reassure 'er, that will, waking up in a strange ship,' 'e said."

"I'll teach him to read my thoughts," she told herself. "I'll crush him like a peanut!"

After Haskell had fed her—and the food tasted good, too—Lucy rubbed her cheeks and lips vigorously. That produced some color. She found, after some search, a measly little shaving mirror, and did what else she could. On demand, Haskell produced her uniform with only a little worried clucking. One glance at it produced revulsion.

She must be a WAC first and a woman later. She couldn't fix this Pete Benham as he deserved to be fixed. He was an officer of the United Nations. And she was an officer of the United Nations. Personalities were out. Femininity was out. His job was sinking Nazis, and her job was to convince him she had some Nazis for him to sink. She had failed to make them believe her. She dressed and hurried up on deck.

The little corvette was thrusting her bow sturdily through breaking gray seas and knocking them into spray. In some haste Lucy climbed higher. She reached the bridge, and moved, unchallenged, past seamen standing by a big searchlight with slats like a Venetian blind across its lens, and past other men cleaning a long-barreled gun.

Lookouts stared intently forward at either side of the forward bridge rail. Captain MacCrummond, pacing restlessly, had his eyes on the sea ahead of his ship. Another officer beside a gleaming compass stand—"a binnacle," she amended—kept on searching the horizon after a quick appreciative glance at her. She decided that she had done a fair job with the mirror.

AT a corner of the house, with his hands tucked behind his back, Lieutenant Benham towered. Thought furrowed his brow. He did not see her. She walked up briskly. He came to with a start and looked down at her. His height made things harder.

"Mr. Benham," she said curtly, "we've a job—Nazis. If you'll come down off your superior masculine perch I'll descend from my womanly pedestal and we can go to work. Even though I am 'a delicate-looking little thing!'"

He blinked. "You've already knocked me off my perch," he said.

"Good! Now I must convince you I'm not hysterical or seeing things or dreaming things. I—I haven't disgraced my Corps. What I told you was true. I think Jensen cut the lifeboat tackle to prevent the crew from making a break. He and his Nazis from the sub might have wanted to hold them prisoners."

HARDTACK



"I liked you the second I laid eyes on your father's ice-cream parlor."

Silent, he probed her intently with his brown eyes.

"You must convince the captain," she said. "When the corvette handles this I'll go delicate again."

"I'm listening," he said, most businesslike.

"The Silver Prince was defenseless—out of convoy," she said. "She hadn't any big gun and gun crew like most merchant ships. They said she'd fly apart in a shower of rust if they fired a gun. She had only little anti-aircraft guns. Couldn't the submarine have found her, winked a threat—"

"They torpedo first mostly," he said.

"But if they needed Diesel oil—supplies?"

He shook his head. "Not likely," he said. "Too great a risk. They'd suspect a hidden gun."

"But if they kept away and sent a boat first?"

"A sub would refuel or borrow provisions from another sub," he said. "They wireless each other."

"We aren't getting anywhere," she said.

He nodded. "That's encouraging."

"I said—"

"If it was simple it wouldn't amount to much," he said.

ABRUPTLY he jerked a hand skyward, turned, and ran. Startled, she stood still, staring. She could see nothing—nothing at all but a glint of silver where gray clouds thinned and the sun was trying to thrust through. Nobody else was excited.

In a minute he was back with a sextant.

"How I need a shot!" he said. "We're supposed to be a certain distance astern of the convoy that's somewhere ahead—I hope."

He squinted up at the sun, turned a screw, and forgot her.

"I'd love to figure out why that sub came alongside before Benham does," she told herself. "Why should it? That snoopy junior engineer Jensen had something to do with it."

But what could one man, even a German agent, do? And she mustn't permit her dislike of Jensen to turn him into a Nazi in her mind. What could he do—a junior engineer? Of a sudden she remembered the wrathful face of the chief engineer of the Silver Prince after the breakdown. The chief had been raging. But why not? His engine had broken down.

She clutched at a thought. "Jensen could have caused that breakdown," she told herself. "Indications of somebody abusing or wrecking his engines would have made the chief red-hot."

She looked at Peter Benham, piddling away so earnestly with his sextant. She told him about the chief.

"Mumph!" he muttered. "Don't bother me now."

"I won't," she flared. "Now or later! I'll furnish Captain MacCrummond with hypotheses of my own—good ones. You're much too busy with the minor details of a junior officer's job."

He wrenched his eye away from the eyepiece of his sextant and turned it on her. "Minor!" he said with insufferable male exasperation. "Lady, for three days now we've been running a special sweep behind this convoy on dead reckoning and—"

"If it's your reckoning it's probably very dead," she said with spirit. "Go on—be nautical!"

She walked away. "Extreme conceit," she told herself. Suddenly she felt a little hollow. "Now I'm on my own to prove to the captain that that ship was captured."

From the stubby masthead a seaman bawled suddenly. She glanced toward the captain. He and the officer near the binnacle were staring like pointers at the sea far off, to the right. She drew closer.

The officer of the watch, at a murmur from MacCrummond, ducked his head. "Starboard thirty!" he said into a voice tube. "Revolutions one-eight-five. . . . Steady!"

The corvette spun around, heeling sharply, and surged away on this new course. Lucy soon saw. They were approaching an oil slick, a huge expanse where that breaking gray sea was dead and flat. In this area and around the edges of it, wreckage and a lifeboat.

"Got one out o' your convoy, miss," said a signalman beside her. He shook his head glumly. "And a quair thing that is. The convoy was well escorted. Very quair!"

She stood alone, watching, while

tight-lipped men searched for survivors. They sighted none. Even the lifeboat was empty.

She waylaid Captain MacCrummond. He frowned, opened his mouth, looked at the gold bars on her shoulders, and did not forbid her the bridge.

"Not the Silver Prince, lass," he said. "A newer ship, by the look o' the gear afloat." With gray smoldering eyes puckered up under his thick eyebrows he studied the oil slick. "Sunk not long before daylight today. Survivors picked up."

IN a rush of quick words she told him about the angry chief engineer and Jensen, who might have disabled the engines.

"After finding this I've decided to close the convoy," he said gravely. "I've a wish to sight the Silver Prince, lass, or know she's missing."

"She won't be there, captain."

He nodded noncommittally and swung away from her.

"He still thinks I threw a cat fit in a nightmare," she told herself miserably.

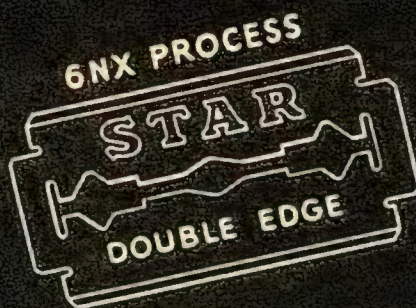
The Dufferin swung back onto her previous course. She plunged more roughly on through the unending gray seas, while the sun, showing in a clearing sky, raced for the western rim of the sea.

Pete Benham came to Lucy once, obviously on orders.

"What was the Silver Prince's station, please?" he asked.

**WALDO WAS
NEVER AS
SMOOTH
AS YOU!**

**WALDO NEVER
TRIED
STAR
BLADES!**



4 for 10¢



"Third from last, second column from the right."

"Any deductions for the joint bag of the *entente uncordiale*?"

"I'm too delicate to deduce," she said, and he went away.

Most of the men in the ship were keeping an eye on her. Their interest had a psychological rather than a romantic tinge. They were wondering if she were off her rocker—gone crackers. Well, they'd get their answer when they found no Silver Prince in that convoy ahead.

Only Haskell, nostalgically faithful to a genuine passenger, seemed wholly sure of her. She went below. Haskell was delighted. He brought coffee; he pampered her. He talked of the days when a ship was not a target.

The tensity that was in that corvette made Lucy return to the bridge as soon as she had set down her coffee cup.

The sea had smoothed out. They were close to the convoy. And even closer to them rushed a destroyer, winking at them a light bright enough to make a mock of the fading sunlight. The Dufferin's own signalmen had been busy with their projector.

"Escort commander," Pete Benham said, reading the blinking light. "Says 'Permission granted.' He's given the Old Ma—the captain leave to investigate this Silver Prince business."

He slipped the strap and handed a pair of binoculars to Lucy. "Have a look," he said dryly. "You know your ship's station."

She took the glasses and swept a column of ships. She felt the blood running to her cheeks. She kept the binoculars up to shield her eyes. There, churning along in her accustomed place, was the Silver Prince.

A MAN, a tiny figure, strolled into view on the port wing of the bridge. She recognized that brown overcoat and gangsterlike checked cap. The mate of the Silver Prince had been no stickler for natty nautical attire. And this was his watch, the four to eight.

She lowered the glasses. Pete Benham wasn't looking at her. That helped. He stretched out a hand and took the binoculars.

She turned blindly; then stopped. The signalman had aimed the signal projector at the Silver Prince. He was calling that ship. An answering blink came from the merchantman.

Acutely aware of curious eyes, she stood still, watching the signalman work the Silver Prince. There was a long pause when he finished.

At last the Silver Prince began winking. Waiting, Lucy felt very cold and very lonely. The signalman with the pad slowly penciled the message. He took it, at a gesture, to Captain MacCrummond. The captain read it with a sober face.

Lucy went to him. He smiled at her.

COLONEL STOOPNAGLE'S FICTIONARY (*Unabashed*)



HOEBO: A tramp working in a potato patch.

PASS'EMIST: Guy who thinks he'll never get by that line of traffic.

MOMERANDUM: A reminder to write mother.

HARANGUE UTANG: A talkative ape.

SKINFOLK: A trapper's relatives.

EMBARRISTER: A blushing lawyer after a lossuit.

SAUSSIE: A pert Australian maiden.

KETCHEN: Where they cook on a two-master.

LICKTURE: Instruction in putting stamps on envelopes.

TOYLET: Bathroom in a dollhouse.

"There, lass," he said. "A bad dream's a bad dream. We'll get ye to port as safely, or better, than that ship."

"Could—you tell me?" she asked. He handed her the slip. She read: "Woman jumped overboard last night. Suggest you keep her under protection."

"That's—not true," she said. "Thank you."

She handed back the message. She felt that all the eyes were pitying now. The scrawled words burned in her mind. She caught at a straw.

"Captain, those last four words—'keep her under protection,'" she said. "Isn't that regular hypocritical Nazi phrasing? Wouldn't you say 'keep her locked up'?"

"I might," said MacCrummond slowly.

"And Nazis might now be in control of that ship!"

Pete Benham was at the captain's shoulder, waiting politely but insistently. Lucy crinkled her forehead at him and walked away.

"He'll tell the captain that the lifeboat I said dropped at one end looks all right now," she told herself.

She clung stubbornly to the deck, shunning company and staring at the Silver Prince churning along in the column of ships. Slowly night took over the convoy. When the command to darken ship was given, Captain MacCrummond suggested that she go below.

"In the morning the bridge is yours again," he said. "This'll be a grand smooth night for you to sleep."

Sleep? What was up? Or was this mere kindness?

After an hour in Pete Benham's bare cabin she could stand it no longer. She shoved her life-saving suit into the bed and covered it with a blanket. Realistic enough. She crept past the empty wardroom and past Haskell making coffee in the pantry.

It was black on deck. The ship was alive with men. All these men astir meant something.

The Dufferin had dropped astern of the convoy. Lucy could discern on the black horizon ahead some blacker blotches that were the trailing ships.

She looked up. Men were working on the bridge. In the murk she could just make out that they were building a narrow platform projecting beyond the starboard rail of the bridge, supporting it strongly. "Get plenty of fenders out," somebody said.

Fenders? A ship used fenders when she went alongside a dock.

Once she heard Pete Benham's voice quite close: "Well, if the first lieutenant thinks it's a fool's errand, he shouldn't begrudge me the job."

"'Boarders away!'" said another voice. "I never thought I'd hear that command in a corvette."

Lucy's heart thumped. She scrambled boldly up the bridge ladder and took refuge in the blackest shadows of the asdic house. She pressed her back close to one of its black-screened windows and made herself inconspicuous. Her uniform was black in this unrelieved night.

SHE had not long to wait. Men came tramping onto the bridge—many men. She was surprised at the number of steel helmets that, one after another, showed vaguely at the ladder head. She heard the clink and thud of guns as they formed up on the port side. The captain and then Pete spoke to them. Brief instructions. A few gruff assents.

The ship was throbbing more perceptibly under her feet. Or was it only the blood in her veins and the thump of her heart? No; the Dufferin was creeping ahead in the dark into the space between two columns of ships.

Captain MacCrummond had taken

over the bridge. She heard his voice, low, controlled, giving orders through the voice tube to the helmsman down in the shuttered wheelhouse on the deck below. And gunners had quietly manned the Oerlikon A.A. guns on either side of the bridge.

Feeling the corvette rising and falling under her, she knew it would be damaging, even dangerous, for two ships to come together. How, then—

She saw the dark hull of a ship looming up close alongside. The Dufferin had suddenly sheered in. It happened so quickly that it shocked her. She heard a cry from the bridge of the taller ship.

"Let's go!" said Pete Benham.

The men swirled around the house, across the deck, and onto the new platform in a quick dark tide. How could they hope to scale that sheer side? But, as that thought came, the Dufferin gained on the other ship, and she saw the freighter's low well deck, a vague gap in the blackness, draw level with the corvette's bridge.

"Boarders!" Pete cried. He jumped.

A dark wave of men surged after him. She heard the crackle of strained timbers and felt the ship sway away under her. They were alongside. Feet were drumming on the freighter's steel deck. Her cold hands were clenched. Her fingernails were digging into her palms. The men were thinning out on the bridge, vanishing onto that well deck.

"Now!" she whispered, and ran with the last few men of the boarding party. Her leap carried her out into dreadful emptiness; then she landed painfully on the hard deck.

Above her, on the bridge ladder, Pete Benham was shouting something to the watch officer of the Silver Prince.

She did not wait to listen. She had her plan. She ran aft into the alleyway, past her own queerly familiar room to the ladder that descended

*****★*****

AIR RAID WARNING

Posted over a pinball machine in Alabama: "In case of an air raid, crawl under this machine. It never has been hit."

into some unknown glory hole where the Norwegian steward berthed.

She would get that steward, bring him up, make him tell Pete Benham why he had led her to that lifeboat. She gained lesser known territory. No one was stirring.

The dim blue lights that burned inside the ship helped her along. Would it be this way? No; she remembered there was a thwartship passage and some sort of cargo port here.

She stopped dead. Her hurrying feet had brought her almost into a group of men—men working furi-

ously beside that cargo port. A breath from the sea blew upon her. That steel door low in the ship's side was ajar. One blue light revealed what these men were doing. She saw a rough trough of stout yellow timbers, heavily braced, slanting sharply downward toward the cargo door. A long glinting torpedo swung beside it, suspended inches above the steel deck plates, in the grip of a chain hoist. They were raising it to put it in the trough.

CONFUSED thoughts of what she had read about torpedoes whirled through her head. You didn't shoot them; they propelled themselves, once they were set and released.

She turned, unseen, and sped away. Suddenly a spatter of shots came from somewhere above. Then many shouts and cries of command. She climbed up toward the noise, out onto the well deck, and up, up to the bridge.

Somebody grabbed her by the shoulder and jammed a gun butt at her stomach. "Dufferin!" she gasped, and twisted away from a relaxing hand. Men were shoving others into the wheelhouse. She pushed in. A blue light was on there, too. Pete Benham was facing a bunch of sullen men. She recognized none of them.

"A torpedo!" she said to him, breathless.

"You!" He was aghast.

"A gang of them have got a torpedo down at a cargo port!"

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He recovered fast. He jerked his pistol hand toward the prisoners, spoke a name, and a Dufferin man took over that round-up.

"Show me," Pete said to her. "Bowers, Macfarlane, Kingsley, follow me."

She led the way.

"These Nazis sank that other ship—last night," he muttered to her. "One of 'em boasted to me. Show me that torpedo gang!"

Cold air came blowing as they neared the thwartship passage. Feeling it, Pete grabbed her by the shoulder and thrust her behind him. The other Dufferin men silently pushed past her. Automatically she tiptoed on.

A command from Pete rasped out harshly enough. A single reverberating shot. The thud of a blow, perhaps from a rifle butt. A snarl and the jangle and clink of the chain hoist. The cargo door clanged shut.

"Add this bunch to the beauty contest," Pete said. "Macfarlane, stand by here till we break this ship's own men out of their pen."

He started her moving with an arm across her back. It was surprising how much she needed that arm. They followed the guards. He was shaking; it was laughter. But he hurried her along. "Delicate little—commando," he said. "Eats nails for breakfast."

"Did I make you board her?"

"You did. That deduction from the 'under protection' slip—"

She pulled away from him. "Now

you're going insufferable again!" she warned. "Be fair! That alone wasn't enough!"

"Well, the forward tackle of that lifeboat was brand-new manila," he said. "It showed up yellow as corn silk in the glasses. You don't often reeve one new tackle for a lifeboat."

"That's better, but it still isn't the deciding clue. Tell me!"

"No clue!" His voice was grim. "Lady, often we stay months at sea, with the Atlantic kicking us in the face, and never a crack at a Nazi. Would we pass up the slimmest chance of closing with 'em? Even if you'd been as balmy as—" He cut that off.

They came out on the well deck.

"Oh!" she said. "That makes sense. They are U-boat men?"

He opened his mouth and roared: "Get those Silver Princes out of the fo'c's'le! Randall!"

"We're bringing 'em out, sir!"

"Yes, they're U-boat men," Pete said. "Half the crew and most of the tin fish from a sub which is now tailing along safely somewhere beyond asdic range. And meanwhile these Nazis, snug inside the convoy, probably planned to pick off a couple of ships a night at close range. The asdic ratings in the escorts would be blowing their eardrums trying to hear the propeller of a sub that wasn't there. Clever. But now we know where to hunt that sub."

"You've got Jensen?"

"On the bridge. Wearing the mate's rig. With Jensen planted, the plan

for a sub to gobble her up was sure-fire."

"When they'd used their torpedoes they'd break down again and let what was left of the convoy go on," Lucy said. "The sub would pick them up, sink the Silver Prince, and leave her crew to the boats if they were lucky."

"No use trying to explain anything to you," he said. "Except this," he added. His arm swept around her, tightened and turned her toward him. He bent and kissed her very hard. For just a moment she helped.

A gush of men showed up vaguely from the fo'c's'le entrance. Reluctantly he released her.

"I'll bring you across the Detroit River, Lucy, when this war is over."

Could he? This was absurd, of course. But sweet—very sweet!

"Pooh!" she said, keeping her voice almost steady. "You couldn't make me cross a brook!"

"I've got to get moving." He spoke savagely. "But, Lucy, I'll be here dragging stray Nazis out of corners and taking war heads off torpedoes for an hour yet. Not what I'd like to be doing."

It took less time than that. Leaden-hearted, Lucy heard a megaphone hail the corvette.

Pete Benham marshaled his prisoners by the well deck to board the corvette.

The Dufferin drew in. Closer and closer her vague bulk came, until Lucy could see the platform. It had been lowered halfway to the wheel-house deck to make the return safer.

"Smartly, when ye come," MacCrummond's strong voice warned the prisoners.

"Let's go—prisoners first!"

The Nazis, with a bit of coaxing, scrambled across.

The Dufferin rose lightly on a sea, ground against the freighter, and then drew away. Pete's voice rang out, resonant, commanding: "All hands! With a rush! Jump! Now! Jump!"

Spurred to quick action, the Dufferins went springing across. Lucy found it an easy leap. Last of all, as the two ships began to draw farther apart, Pete Benham followed. He blundered into Lucy. She had stopped dead, thunderstruck, on the Dufferin's deck.

"Oh!" said Lucy. She pressed her hands to her hot face. "Oh!"

She turned from his reaching hand and rushed to the bridge. "Captain!" she said. "Captain! I'm—I'm not supposed to be in this ship! I—just crossed with the others—automatically somehow—as I did before. I—I must go back!"

There was a pause. Then Captain MacCrummond spoke firmly, decisively in the darkness. "I'm sorry, lass. But I canna risk damage to my ship and to you by trying another landing for such a purpose. Ye'll just have to come along wi' us to your port—aye, an' make the best of it."

THE END





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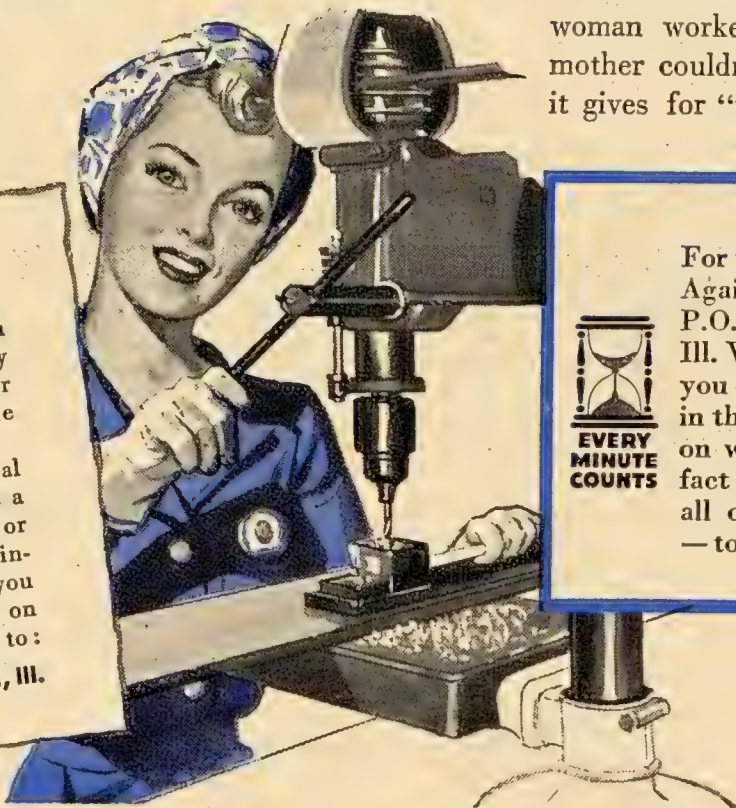
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(*T. M. Reg. U. S. Pat. Off.)

ELMER DAVIS AND THE NEWS

Continued from Page 13

fought shy of conferences. But, to save time, he has set up two regular daily conferences, one with members of his policy staff, the other with the press relations chiefs of the armed forces.

The conference with the Army and Navy is one of Davis' most important functions and one in which he has not been entirely successful. He was shrewd enough to comprehend early in the game that his fight for more news would not be with the press relations officers but with the brass hats who have been averse to telling the public anything more than that there is a war going on. In fact, high-ranking officers did not always let their press relations chiefs know what was going on—which made it tough for Davis. Once he made a statement that he and the public had full knowledge of all U. S. warship losses up to that moment. The next day the Navy announced three sinkings which had occurred two weeks before, about which neither Davis nor the public had known anything.

AFTER that Davis went directly to Admiral King and wrung from him this concession: That although the OWI could not see originals of communiqués filed directly to King, Davis would be given daily an honest, non-withholding "interpretation" of everything touched upon in these secret messages. Since this agreement Davis has had every reason to believe that he really knows all the facts almost as soon as the Navy.

Theoretically, he has the power to go over King's head if he believes that a piece of news should be released when King is set against it. However, he has used this authority only once. On November 1, two days before elections, Captain Leland Lovette, Navy press chief, informed him that a U. S. aircraft carrier (identified on January 11 as the *Hornet*) had been sunk in the fighting off the Santa Cruz Islands. Admiral King did not want the news released for a few days, until it could be determined whether or not the Japs knew of the sinking. Davis realized that if the news were withheld and then released shortly after elections there would be a loud catcall of "Politics!" After conferring with Secretary of the Navy Knox, who agreed that he had a point, he called the President. The President backed Davis. He himself announced the news of the sinkings.

Davis' most recent clash with the armed forces over the ban on releasing pictures of American dead and wounded was also resolved only when the OWI chief took his case direct to the White House. The President, worried about home-front complacency, agreed with him that it could best be dispelled by allow-

ing publication of realistic newsreel and still photographs showing the sacrifices, suffering, and dangers endured by U. S. troops.

The Army-Navy relationship is the only executive responsibility which now falls entirely and directly into Davis' lap. The rest of the multi-administrative duties in running an unwieldy organization like the OWI are carried out through the division chiefs. In addition, Davis last spring hired Nicholas Roosevelt, a former newspaperman, soldier, diplomat, and author, to help him cope with the Army and Navy.

Because of this delegation of power Davis frequently gets ahead of his work. Occasionally he strolls into the outer office, occupied by his secretary and George Barnes, and asks, "Any grief? Any headaches? Any mail?" Sometimes he says to Barnes, "How is the cigarette situation today?" That means that Davis, who smokes at least two packs a day, has run out of cigarettes. Barnes reaches into his top drawer, pulls out a pack of them, then refuses fifteen cents. If he is not at his desk, Davis helps himself to a pack and leaves fifteen cents.

Davis is probably the easiest-to-see big shot in Washington. Any one can barge in and talk to him. So conscientious is he that he always leaves word at the OWI news desk that he is to be phoned at home if any request for important information comes in after hours which cannot be answered by somebody else.

He has a fetish about maintaining a clear desk. OWI employees are continually amazed by his quick attention to their copy. They often get it back with penciled comments by Davis less than half an hour after submitting it for his O. K. His office

is as uncluttered as his desk. There are no mementos on the wall, only maps: a world map above the conference table, and on the opposite wall a series of eight small maps showing the areas reached by the OWI short-wave outlets. A bookcase contains about two dozen non-fiction best sellers, plus a Bible given Davis by Denis, Cardinal Dougherty, of Philadelphia.

The only personal gimcrack on Davis' desk is a glass paperweight. In it is a picture of the fabulous Davis cat, General Grey, a ten-year-old serene and beautiful Persian. For months Davis went haphazardly around Washington, like any other new government employee, vainly looking for an apartment. When he finally found one, he mentioned General Grey. The landlord shook his head and said, "I'm afraid, Mr. Davis, you'll have to get rid of the cat." In his most pleasant old-school manner Davis replied, "I'm afraid you'll have to keep the apartment." He had to turn down many apartments before he found one that would allow him to keep a cat. "The General is a well behaved elderly gentleman who wouldn't cause any trouble to any one," he said, "and I wouldn't break up the family after ten years."

MANY people who meet Davis for the first time in Washington tell him he looks like Paul McNutt or Cordell Hull. His answer is, "We all look like Harding." So far, that has been a consistent conversation stopper. Physically, he is a caricaturist's easy mark, what with his black beetle eyebrows, black bow ties, and gray spats. He always wears gray suits and white shirts except in the hottest months of the summer, when he relents and puts on a cool white suit. He carries a cane.

In Washington he has tried to slip into the old-shoe pattern of his New York life, but he doesn't have the leisure to do it. To recapture the atmosphere of his New York Century Club bridge game, he sits in on similar gatherings at the Cosmos Club, but only once a week. He plays for a twentieth of a cent and his Washington bridge cronies are a professor of medicine at Georgetown University, Nathan Eddy of the Public Health Service, and any other regulars who happen to be around. Davis still doesn't know their first names.

Until Mrs. Davis moved there, life in Washington was very lonely for her husband. He lived at the Carlton, had lunch (fruit salads) sent up to his office, and generally dined over a cut of roast and official business with one of the other OWI executives. When work permitted, he went to bed early to get his quota of nine hours' sleep a night.

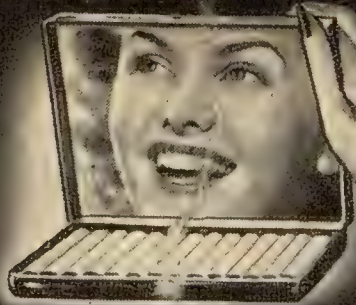
The first social contacts the Davises made in Washington were the Wallaces. Mrs. Davis liked the Vice-President and his wife very much. On Saturday afternoons she often entertains members of her husband's

THE HOME FRONT



"Sure, the collar is fine—but I only bought the shirt last week!"

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staff and such friends as ex-Rhodes Scholar William Ziegler and Robert Hale, new Republican congressman from Maine, Roark Bradford, now writing Navy training pamphlets, Ed Murrow and his British wife. In their new apartment the Davises live just opposite Eugene Meyer, publisher of the Washington Post. Mr. Meyer likes to play bridge, and now and then gets up a quiet conservative game for Davis and a few other quiet conservative friends.

Davis doesn't and probably never will like wartime Washington. He explained his attitude somewhat in a speech he made last fall. After outlining all the miseries of life in Washington, he said: "What keeps us there . . . [is] only the work itself; only the sense of being part of the greatest enterprise in our history. Money, glory, fame are not to be found in Washington; indeed, sometimes it seems that the chief emolument of government service is a one-way ticket to the doghouse."

Even in the "doghouse" he has kept his Hoosier wit and his faculty for logically summing up a problem. One day one of the OWI's top writers dropped in to chat with him. But the usually courteous Davis was very busy. He scarcely looked up from his typewriter.

"What are you doing?" the writer asked.

Davis, his eyes on the keyboard, said, "I'm writing the most important literary work of my life." He paused. "I hope to get the biggest price for this of anything I've ever written." He paused again. Then he grinned, shifted his twinkling eyes up to meet his visitor's. "I expect to get \$25,000,000 for this piece."

He did. It was his statement before the House Appropriations Committee on September 28, 1942. And the \$25,000,000 piece was worth the money. Even Congressional leaders who had scoffed and sniped at the mere idea of a government information service shook Davis' hand and thanked him for the wonderful job he was doing.

THIS statement is a typical example of his writing and thinking. It is so simple and intelligent that a child or a Congressional committee could have no trouble comprehending its meaning. It begins: "The U. S. Office of War Information is a war agency which owes its existence solely to the war, and was established to serve as one of the instruments by which the war will be won. The war is going to be won primarily by fighting, but history, both recent and remote, proves that victory of the fighting forces can be made easier by what is called psychological or political warfare, the prosecution of which has been entrusted primarily to this office. We are in a sense an auxiliary to the armed forces—an organization whose operations can pave the way for their operations and make their success easier."

Davis referred to the objectives of

the Overseas Branch of the OWI, which is headed by playwright Robert Sherwood and takes up most of OWI's time, personnel, and money. On the domestic front Davis painted an even broader picture of OWI's activities. His creed is to "give the American people the fullest possible understanding of what this war is about—a war which our enemies, for more than two years past, have called a world revolution, and which they may have been conducting as a world revolution for their world supremacy far more than as a war of the old-fashioned type. But really it is a counterrevolution against the ideas and principles which first appeared in this country in 1776, and spread from here over most of the world. So it is the job of the OWI not only to tell the American people how the war is going, but where it is going and where it came from, its nature and origins, how our government is conducting it, and what (besides national survival) our government hopes to get out of victory."

DESPITE its great potential power and unlimited field of operations, the campaign waged by Elmer Davis and the OWI to inform the American people about the war has not been altogether successful. From the battle fronts the news so far has been thin, even from North Africa, where the American armies presumably control communication facilities. During the Sicilian campaign the flow of reports was steadier, giving hope for an improved future. On the home front, OWI, despite its division of writers, researchers, statisticians, artists, investigators, broadcasters, pamphleteers, and movie makers, has fallen down badly. On the vital issue of gasoline and rubber conservation the citizens of the U. S. are still confused and misinformed. Nor were they adequately prepared for the government's far-reaching over-all rationing program.

Apologists for the OWI point to the vacillations of other government agencies. But in Davis' own words, the responsibility for telling the people "how our government is conducting the war" lies squarely with the OWI. When another agency beclouds an issue which must be made clear, it is the job of the OWI to press for clarification, even if that necessitates carrying the problem to the White House. Personal apologists for Davis say his deputies, his associates, are supposed to carry out most administrative duties. But in the final analysis it is the chief of the OWI who must make decisions on policy, on hiring and firing important personnel, on squabbles between his own division chiefs, on struggles with other agencies. And that chief is Elmer Davis.

Last summer an anti-administration Congress did not take too kindly to Davis' request for funds. Slashing away at appropriations, the House killed OWI's Domestic Branch. Davis threatened to resign, and through the

efforts of the Senate a small portion of the Domestic Division's funds was restored. Although the cut still meant closing branch offices and curtailing more than 50 per cent of the work, Davis then decided to keep his job. But he clearly underlined the fact that with its limited budget OWI could no longer adequately fulfill the many tasks it had been set up to do.

Elmer Davis was born on January 13, 1890, in Aurora, Indiana. His father, Elam H. Davis, was a fairly well-to-do banker. His mother was a schoolteacher and Elmer followed in her footsteps. He worked his way through Franklin College, teaching classical history at Franklin High School during his last two college years. He received his A. B. in 1910, his A. M. in 1911, and won a Rhodes Scholarship in 1912. His stay at Queen's College, Oxford, plus visits to Europe during his vacations, helped bring his interest in things historical up to date.

His first job, on returning to the United States in 1913, was with Adventure Magazine at ten dollars a week. After a year he was offered a cub reporter's job on the New York Times. He worked there for ten years, as reporter, sports writer, political expert, foreign correspondent, and finally editorial writer.

In 1924 he left the Times and tried his hand at fiction writing, turning out a steady stream of light-reading but lucrative novels, short stories, and essays. So prolific was he that, when called upon recently by his publishers to add his lead plates to the scrap drive, he could emulate Nathan Hale by saying, "I regret that I have only fourteen out-of-print books to give to my country."

IT is hard to believe that Elmer Davis, the serious-minded government official, could ever have written such light fiction as White Pants Willie or Friends of Mr. Sweeney or I'll Show You the Town. His humorous flair is now noticeable only in his occasional twists of wry wit. A reporter recently asked him if he had a nickname. "No," he said. "Why should I? Isn't Elmer enough?" Once on the air he quipped that a report which described Belgium as being in a semi-relaxed state must have emanated from important Belgian semi-circles. Last spring Robert Horton, a former OWI employee, sent Davis a strongly worded gripe about a release which OWI had prepared, and added, "I hope you understand that this is written purely in the sense of constructive criticism." Davis sent the objection back with a curt "Nuts"—and added, "P.S.: I hope you understand that this is written purely in the spirit of constructive criticism."

At the time when Davis agreed, against his better judgment, to become Director of the OWI, he was extremely happy and successful at his job as CBS news analyst. He was making \$57,000 a year, as compared to the meager \$12,000 paid by the

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United States. He really loved broadcasting. When he tried it first in 1933, making a report on election returns for WABC, New York outlet of CBS, he was anything but an instantaneous spellbinder, and he went back to free-lance writing. Late in August, 1939, Paul White, chief of the CBS News Bureau, asked him to fill in for News Bureau, asked him to fill in for H. V. Kaltenborn, then on a trip in the end agreed to do it. This time he was an immediate hit. When he left CBS he was speaking over a ninety-station hook-up five minutes a day, six days a week, and had built up the largest listening audience of any news commentator, estimated at 12,500,000.

Davis attributes his popularity on the air to the fact that his voice "sounds like back home." His Hoosier twang became identified with common sense and honesty, and he enhanced this quality with brevity and the pungent phrase. Most of all, his stature in radio was due to his simple, logical presentation of the news, with no trace of anything like hysteria or personal prejudice.

Until 1939 he attempted to avoid being classified as either "isolationist" or "interventionist." Only when the Nazi blitz on England brought home the realities of global war did he become an active advocate of all-out aid to England. Wanting to make a definite personal contribution to the war effort, he obtained a reserve lieutenant's commission in the Navy. He expects to be called to active duty if he should ever leave OWI.

Going to Washington meant that Davis had to uproot himself and his wife, Florence, whom he calls "Fliss," from the comfortable groove of a well ordered life on Manhattan's West 116th Street. The Davises lived in a quiet six-room apartment near Columbia University. They had selected their home to be close to the Lincoln School, a progressive private institution attended by the two Davis children, Robert Lloyd and Carolyn Anne. Bob Davis, twenty-three, is now a lieutenant with the Armored Forces at Fort Custer, while his sister, seventeen, is a student at Smith College.

BEING a man who for twenty-eight of his fifty-three years has been mainly concerned with the clear, concise, logical presentation of the news as his conscience and intelligence interpreted it, Davis has found an element of maddening irony in his present job. His instincts as a reporter frequently run counter to his duties as a government official. In the case of the eight Nazi saboteurs caught last summer on the Atlantic coast, he lined up with the newspapers and fought with them to have a few accredited reporters present at the trial. Bucking against the Army and the Navy, he finally won the right to release the thrilling story of John Cullen, the Coast Guard hero who helped capture four of the saboteurs. Other Davis triumphs included the belated release of the

"truth about Pearl Harbor," the establishment of a realistic policy of publishing casualty lists, and the results of his insistence that the Navy and the War Shipping Administration give the people a box score of U-boat losses month by month.

But in the long run Davis the reporter has not been so successful. As a leading member of a by no means completely co-ordinated government, he often finds himself at issue with other officials. In a year this calm, sober Hoosier has had as many run-ins as hot-headed Leon Henderson had in two years. Davis argued with OCD Director Landis over the danger of air raids, was put on the spot by conflicting statements from the Selective Service officers, crossed words with doughty Bill Jeffers over rubber "facts." He has had to defend Victory, an OWI picture magazine, against Congressional attacks led by Representative Taber. When Senator Byrd said OWI wasted money, Davis hurled back refutations. After a speech to the American Newspaper Guild in Boston last June, he feuded temporarily with Washington reporters and dodged a Congressional barrage fired by Representative Dewey Short and Senator Bridges. During that same hot Washington month Davis and the OWI were accused of fomenting the Detroit race riots and were put through the Congressional appropriations wringer which eventually dried up part of the agency's funds.

THE external problems of the OWI and its director are as nothing compared to its internal inferno. Shortly after his arrival, Davis remarked wearily that although he had been aware his job required many qualifications, he hadn't understood that infighting was one of them. He was prepared to struggle against waste and duplication. In six months he eliminated 469 government publications, curtailed 368 others. But he has had less success in dealing with OWI's temperamental, highly skilled personnel. In April the long simmering behind-the-scenes ferment exploded into the open when fifteen writers, headed by Pulitzer Prize winner Henry Pringle, resigned. They charged that "promoters" had turned the OWI into an "office of war ballyhoo" on the home front.

Davis denied the "ballyhoo" charge with typical terseness. "We deal in one plain commodity," he said—"the facts the people of this country need to win the war."

Despite his troubles, he has one mighty advantage over many another agency chief. The people of the United States respect Elmer Davis and know he is honest. They know he has no political ambitions. They hear his voice on the radio, and it's still the same old Elmer. If public confidence means anything in Washington, Elmer Davis may yet survive as director to write an OWI epitaph for Dr. Goebbels.

THE END

THEY KEEP THE PRESIDENT SAFE

Continued from Page 23

House. If an agent catches a cold, he is sent home to recover completely, for if one man of this co-ordinated White House job were not fully able to carry out his assignment, the efficiency of the entire detail might be strained.

At their physical trainer's behest, they play handball by the hour. They say it builds up lung power for the most grueling detail of their job—trotting alongside the President's car when it is moving slowly through crowds. They have to dogtrot for miles on occasion, all the time keeping a sharp lookout for suspicious people lurking in upper windows or darting from the crowds toward the President's car.

When Mr. Roosevelt drove through Monterrey, Mexico, recently with President Avila Camacho, the procession moved through the packed streets at something less than ten miles an hour. But the Secret Service men had to run virtually every step of the way. Their total dogtrot mileage under a hot Mexican April sun was over five miles a man. And while on the run they had to snatch screaming Indian children from beneath the car's wheels, bat down strange bouquets which came hurtling toward it, and keep photographers

lacking the red prensa brassards at a distance.

The Secret Service seems to be at its best escorting the President through large crowds. The agents can quickly tell the difference between a crank who might be dangerous and an overenthusiastic "jumper"—a person who, suddenly finding the President of the United States before his eyes, jumps up and down screaming wildly, "It's him! It's him!" In most crowds the problem is not keeping away would-be assassins but controlling exuberant spectators.

When the President is on the road, the Secret Service places a cordon of agents around his car, railroad or motor, whenever it stops.

When he is touring war plants, the Secret Service not only travels with him but sends men ahead. Every assembly line, every corner, every railroad siding that he will pass is inspected. Plant managers are instructed to say nothing in advance to their workers about the President's coming. As a result of this, the agents frequently encounter a situation which must be solved quickly and without hurting any one's feelings.

Mr. Roosevelt's car rolls into the main corridor of a gun factory. A worker looks up from his machine—*There's old Frank himself!* The excited man darts toward the car with hand outstretched. But before he is within thirty feet of it, an agent jumps in front of him, shakes his

hand, gently spins him around and gives him a polite shove back toward his lathe. He thinks he has shaken the hand of a high government official—until some kill-joy pal tells him the fact.

During the President's two major tours of war plants and Army camps in the fall of 1942 and the spring of 1943, the Secret Service precautions were implemented by thousands of soldiers guarding the route of his train. Every inch of track from Washington to California and back again was inspected. Every switch was locked to make sure there could be no collision or derailment. Upward of 150,000 soldiers were used on each trip.

Occasionally an Army officer would take his Presidential guard duty as something of a God-given assignment and consequently would go well beyond his orders. One night in April, 1943, when the train stopped on a Missouri siding for a lay-over of a few hours, members of the Presidential party who attempted to leave their cars for a breath of fresh air found bayonets rammed at them when they stepped from the train.

As I started out of my car a young corporal ran up out of the dark and pushed his bayonet to within an inch or so of my belt-line. "Get back on that train, buddy," he said.

"What in hell goes on here?" I asked, climbing back.

"My orders are that no one gets

(Continued on page 72)



"Just as a gag he tried calling Hitler—and he got him!"

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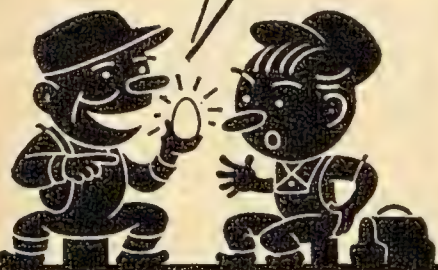


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SHOULD OLD ACQUAINT- ANCE BE FORGOT?

Continued from Page 15

tions as to the future of the whole Mediterranean picture, which was so unheard-of in copy for the Trend that the linotype operator who set it became ill and was sent home.

Well, Mr. Finch was a little jittery, but he thought, After all, I'm sick of this kind of life, and if absent-mindedness won't change it, I might as well be out of a job. Anyway, he thought, I don't think he'll fire me, because he'll never get anybody else who'll stand it, and the magazine doesn't come out until Monday, and my vacation begins then.

So in the next few days he went on building up his reputation for absent-mindedness, and in the home circle he certainly built up a lulu. At first Mrs. Finch fought every point, but it is hard to fight an opponent who can't remember the rules. And mad as she was, she really began to respect him, for he was a lot more inventive than she had realized.

On Saturday a number of people dropped in. Among them was Mr. Tidley, very respectful and subdued. Mr. Finch was so pleased that he took two quick drinks and under their influence, and what almost amounted to deference from Mrs. Finch, he spurred on to even greater triumphs. He caught Helen Tolfrey in the library, and embraced her with scandalous thoroughness under the impression, as he explained when she tried to date him up, that she was Jane Heath. As no grimy fingerprints had ever before been discernible on the pure white of Jane's repute, this partly atoned to Helen for the insult of his apology.

HE asked his brother-in-law, Mr. Grinsted, where dear Emmy was, and Mr. Grinsted was not pleased, for Emmy had just run off with a handsomer man. Of course Mr. Finch was sorry. "I forgot," he said, "about that Polish wrestler fellow. Forgive me, Herb."

"Wrestler nothing!" said Mr. Grinsted angrily. "He was a count!"

"So he was," said Mr. Finch. "Very intellectual fellow. Ah, they educate them better in Europe."

Mr. Grinsted glanced at the ring of expectant faces, snorted, and went over to talk with Mrs. Finch.

By Saturday night all Mr. Finch's minor enemies had sued for peace. Even Mrs. Finch maneuvered respectfully, holding her fire. But on Sunday Mr. Prance appeared. Mr. Prance was a far greater menace than Mr. Tidley, for his intentions were honorable. He really wanted to marry Mrs. Finch. He was deferential and charming to Mr. Finch, but he exploded small mines under him whenever possible. More than once Mr. Finch had fully expected to be asked to grant a divorce.

Well, it appeared Mr. Prance had sprained his wrist and it bothered him a good deal driving. He wondered if Mrs. Finch would drive him over to see a client back of Armonk—a farmer with neither auto nor phone who could only be seen on Sunday.

"Sure," said Mr. Finch heartily. "I'll drive you over myself. Come along. We could take my car, only of course you have a B card."

"But I don't want to take you away from your guests, Fred," said Mr. Prance. "Now, if Fran—"

"Nonsense," said Mr. Finch. "No trouble at all. These are Fran's friends, not mine, anyway."

Some of the friends laughed and Mr. Prance looked foolish. Mrs. Finch, who knew there wasn't any client, that Mr. Prance just wanted to get her alone, looked a little contemptuous and said, "You'd better go with Fred." So they went.

On the way, Mr. Finch said, "You know, George, I don't know what's wrong with me, I'm so absent-minded. I guess you just wanted to go with Fran, didn't you?"

"Oh, not specially," said Mr. Prance. "Of course it's always a pleasure to be with Fran, but—"

"I see," said Mr. Finch. "Well, I'd

A man is known by the company he keeps—but some men are known by the company they can't get into. Then, too, there's the man who is known not so much by the company he keeps as the company he keeps out of.

sort of got the idea that you were pretty fond of Fran."

"Certainly," said Mr. Prance. "I respect and admire Fran, but—"

"Oh, well, then, of course you wouldn't want to marry her," said Mr. Finch.

"I've never dreamed of such a thing!" said Mr. Prance.

"What control!" said Mr. Finch. And neither said anything more.

They came to a tumble-down house which Mr. Prance said was his client's, and he got out and went to the door. As soon as he knocked, Mr. Finch drove off. When he got home, Mrs. Finch said, "Where's George?"

"At his client's," said Mr. Finch.

"But, good heavens," said Mrs. Finch, "how do you expect him to get back?" She sort of laughed, but Mr. Finch just looked horrified and said, "I'll go for him at once."

But half an hour later, when Mr. Prance had struggled back to the main road and called up, Mr. Finch had forgotten again and was in the library, reading. So Mrs. Finch said, "You'll have to go after him, Fred."

Well, Mr. Finch got lost two or three times and used up a lot of Mr. Prance's gasoline, but he found Mr. Prance finally. "My Lord, George," he said, "this absent-mindedness of

mine is terrible. Here," he said, handing him a bottle. "I brought this thinking you'd need a restorative."

"I do indeed," said Mr. Prance, taking out the cork.

But Mr. Finch looked fixedly at the bottle and then grabbed it and said, "Great Scott, I got the wrong bottle! This is bichloride."

And then he started back and, except when Mr. Prance, whose nerve was nearly gone, screamed, he drove nearly all the way on the left-hand side of the road. Because, he said, the country was so lovely he kept thinking they were in England.

IT was darn little sympathy Mr. Prance got out of Mrs. Finch, and he went home early. But Mr. Finch had several drinks out of the bottle he had said contained bichloride.

On Monday Mr. Finch's vacation began. He read his stuff in the Trend—which was out that day. At noon Mr. Briggs called him and he was fired. He didn't tell Mrs. Finch, but all during his vacation he worried a lot, and the day it was over he went back to the office. He worked all morning and was sitting at his desk when Mr. Briggs came in.

"What the hell are you doing here, Finch?" said Mr. Briggs. "I thought I told you you were fired."

"Gosh, that's so!" said Mr. Finch.

Mr. Briggs said, "Well, get out."

"Sure," said Mr. Finch. "But first I want to get your O. K. on a memo to send to the stockholders, for you may want to change it. I wouldn't have written it if I'd remembered about being fired, but I thought they'd like to know about all the commendatory letters we got on that last issue—the one with my piece about the Mediterranean situation. Why," he said, "it brought in five hundred new subscriptions."

So Mr. Briggs took the memo and read it, getting purpler and purpler as he muttered such phrases as "congratulate you on the firmness with which you face the future," and "constructive policy instead of querulous complaining"; and then he struck the part where Mr. Finch said he had written it all himself, and he tore it across.

"I'll rewrite it," he said. "We can't send that out."

"Of course," said Mr. Finch. And then he said, "Good Lord, I forgot! They've gone! Yes," he said, "I forgot to mark them 'Hold for O. K.' and the girl must have sent them." And then, as Mr. Briggs just sat down heavily and glared at him, he said, "Well, good-bye, Mr. Briggs."

"Wait!" said Mr. Briggs. He took off his glasses and put them on the table and wiped his forehead. "This absent-mindedness of yours, Finch—are you quite honest about it?"

"Honest?" said Mr. Finch. "Why, certainly. I'm worried about it myself," he said, "and, frankly, I'm sure such things would happen with increasing frequency."

"You think they would?" said Mr. Briggs.

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And Mr. Finch said firmly, "Continually!" And to emphasize the word, he brought his hand down smartly on the table and smashed Mr. Briggs' glasses to smithereens.

And at that Mr. Briggs got up heavily. "All right," he said, "I give in." And he gathered up the fragments and lumbered out of the room.

WHEN Mr. Finch got home that evening he said, "Well, Fran, what do you know? I completely forgot, when I went to the office today, that Briggs fired me two weeks ago."

Then Mrs. Finch, who had been much more womanly and affectionate for some time, blew up with a loud bang. "Now you look here, Fred Finch," she said. "I've just about reached the end of my rope with you. This 'forgetting' business is all very funny, but what do you suppose we're going to live on? You 'forgot'! And so you've frittered away two weeks when you could have been trying to find another job! Of all the outrageous—" And she went on and on.

But Mr. Finch just looked at her vaguely and sat down and read his evening paper. And Mrs. Finch flounced out of the room and went upstairs to cry a while.

So after a few minutes, Mr. Finch went up. "Why, darling," he said, "what is the matter? Have you got a stomach-ache?"

Mrs. Finch just went on crying. But when he patted her shoulder and suggested bicarbonate, she said, "Fred Finch, how can you act like this when we don't know where our next meal is coming from?"

"Why, I suppose it is coming from the kitchen, where it always comes from," said Mr. Finch.

Then Mrs. Finch sat up and said, "Oh, you get me so mixed up with this absent-minded stuff that I don't know where I am. I wouldn't care about your losing your job, and I would do all the work and everything until you found something, but I can't stand any more. Oh, Fred, won't you stop it?"

"You really mean that, Fran?" said Mr. Finch, and she said, "Yes, I do!"

"Very well, then," said Mr. Finch. "I will put my memory back in commission again. And the first thing I remember is that old Briggs took me back again today at a slightly increased salary."

"What!" exclaimed Mrs. Finch. "Well, of all the contemptible tricks! Telling me you'd lost your job, when all the while—"

"Why, Olive, don't excite yourself!" said Mr. Finch.

And Mrs. Finch looked at him a minute without saying anything. Then she got up and put her arms around him and said, "I guess I forgot what I was going to say. Do —do you love me, Fred?"

Mr. Finch thought a minute, and then he said, "Yes, I do." And they went down to dinner.

THE END

THIS MAN'S WAR

CONDUCTED BY OLD SARGE

THAT knock you hear on the door is Opportunity—if you've ever had your heart set on becoming an Aviation Cadet in the Army Air Forces.

WD has loosened the requirements and also brightened the financial picture. Even if you've already been turned down by an Aviation Cadet Board under the old set-up, you can make a new application now. It is estimated that ten out of every hundred men rejected in the past will be able to make the grade on a re-application.

Straight 20-20 vision was formerly



Twins

required. Now you're O. K. if your lamps score 20-30, correctible. There has been a similar easing up of the standards for depth perception, ocular muscle deficiency, blood pressure, hearing, and teeth. As to the other requirements, a new "general intelligence" mental exam has been instituted, so that less educational background is required. The stress is on good common horse sense more than on book learning.

Enlisted men can now take the pre-flight part of cadet training in grade, thus avoiding a possible reduction of pay during this period. During pre-flight, family allowances also continue for the four lower grades of EM and quarters and dependency allowances continue for the three upper grades. After pre-flight the successful candidates are put on a regular cadet basis. The pay is a straight seventy-five dollars a month, plus one dollar a day ration allowance.

The basic requirements for application to an Aviation Cadet Board are that the applicant be seventeen to twenty-six years of age (either a serviceman or a civilian) and have been a citizen of the United States for at least ten years. Seventeen-year-olds are placed in the Air Corps Enlisted Reserve, to be called

for training when they have passed their eighteenth birthday.

Each applicant must submit to the board his birth certificate and three letters of recommendation.

Men accepted are sent to college for five months for a quick round-up course if they have not had any college education. If they've been to college, they go straight into the cadet mill.

At a classification center the Army makes up its mind—and yours too—as to whether you'd be best as pilot, bombardier, or navigator.

The pilot course runs thirty-six weeks, in four equal parts devoted to pre-flight, primary, basic, and advanced training. Bombardiers are trained in twenty-seven weeks; navigators in thirty-three weeks.

There's the picture as it now shapes up. Happy landings!

OLD SARGE.

* * *

My twin brother and I have been trying for some time to be put together in the same outfit. We have talked to higher-ups and they agree it would be better for us to be together, but nobody seems to know what to do about it. Can you tell us, Sarge?

Pvt. E. E. N., Fort Sill, Okla.

Authority is granted in War Department memorandum W 615-6-43 to assign or transfer twins together. I suggest you write to the Adjutant General's office, through channels, requesting that you two be assigned to the same unit.

* * *

Can't something be done about the hats worn by enlisted personnel in the Waves? We try to be a credit to the Navy by looking nice, but how can we? No matter how we arrange our hair, the hats ruin it. The WACs and particularly the Marines have a break in that respect. Their hats really look like something.

If members of the women's services, one of each, stand side by side, the Marine will take the medal for looks every time. It's not because they are more attractive—it's because their hats appeal more to the eye than ours do.

Couldn't another hat be designed for us?

P. E., Y 3/C, Waves Barracks, San Francisco, Calif.

I would sooner get mixed up in a mine field than in an argument like that. It might be all right to tell a general when to attack, or an artilleryman how to aim, or a bom-

bardier how to bomb—but when you tell a woman how to dress, you're playing with dynamite! But maybe there's somebody in the audience who'd like to reply to this letter. If so, come ahead!

* * *

Is it true that the Army issues special money to be used in conquered territory?

Cpl. C. McG., Camp Barkeley, Tex.

The War and Treasury Departments, in co-operation, have issued "spearhead" money for use in newly invaded territory. It is just like regular U. S. currency, but the bills are printed with gold instead of blue seals. Thus, if such money falls into enemy hands, it can readily be detected and rendered valueless. Spearhead money was first used in the invasion of North Africa.

Once we get a foothold in a conquered territory, the government issues "occupation" money. This is issued in the local monetary units. For example, occupation money was issued to soldiers in Sicily with a decreed rate of 100 lire to a dollar. It was made legal tender in Sicily, interchangeable with the local currency.

Occupation money is formally called Allied Military Currency and is so inscribed on one side. The reverse side is imprinted with the Four Freedoms. It is temporary money, designed to avoid financial collapse in conquered territories and to give soldiers a medium of exchange until stabilized currency is established.

* * *

Is it true that a serviceman gets reduced railroad rates on all of his



Looks

travels? Or must it be for round-trip furlough tickets only?

J. G., Porcupine, S. D.

Reduced railroad fares are for furlough travel only and are granted only with the purchase of round-trip tickets. The reduction is 50 per cent. To obtain these rates the serviceman must present his furlough papers at the ticket window.

This department of Liberty is for the men and women of the armed forces of the United States: Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard, also their families and friends. The identity of letter writers will not be disclosed without their permission. Address your letters to: "Old Sarge," c/o Liberty, 205 East 42d St., New York 17, N. Y.

Rack caught the old man's hat by the brim and pulled it down over his ears. "Come on," he said affectionately. "I'll give you a hand."

They took the burner out and cleaned it.

A few moments later the top loader slipped on a piece of loose bark and wrenched his ankle. Rack sent him to camp; and, shedding his coat, took over the job himself. He scaled each car, and the answer to their trouble became plainer as the columns of figures grew. At four o'clock there was not any question.

He crossed to the yarder and pulled the whistle cord. Four long blasts rolled out across the canyon. The loader operator waved at Rack derisively.

"If you're callin' Big Red," he yelled, "you're wastin' steam. He went to town on the last train."

"The devil!" Rack said.

He went back to work with a scowl and a promise that he'd pull Big Red's nose for this—give the guy a little trouble, or even a smell of it, and he went in with both hands swinging. Rack was loading the last car when the Shay chugged into view with a string of empties. Big Red was in the cab. He swung down and met Rack, grinning.

"Aw right, aw right," he said. "Save the bawling-out. I couldn't wait, so I'm a louse. But I done a job for us, boy."

"What did you do?"

"I talked to Tony Borg by hand." Big Red grinned with relish, remembering. "I got him by the neck and shook 'im so hard his eyes damn near fell out."

"Did you do any good?"

"Y'betcha. He's the guy. He's been clippin' us—and plenty! Horton paid 'im to clip us. We got Horton by the seat of the pants now!"

"WELL go in," Rack said, "on this train."

The Shay had rocked through Broken River camp and across the river when Big Red looked at Rack.

"Where's your coat?"

Rack snapped his fingers. "On the loader."

"Well, you won't need it," Big Red said. "When you get your mitts on Horton, it'd just be in the way."

Rack and Big Red swung down from the Shay's cab. The log dump was just ahead, splashed with the glare of the Shay's headlight. River Mill was perhaps a quarter of a mile away, and distance dimmed the screaming of the gang saws there.

"Borg'll be in his office shack," Big Red said.

They went around the panting engine and down the track. They were abreast of the dump when a workman poked his head out of the shack. "The camp's been tryin' to get Rack on the phone," he said. "They want him to call right away."

Big Red scowled. "Now what?"

"I'll find out," Rack said.

The telephone was on the wall above the tally desk. "Twist her tail," the workman said. "Ask the operator at the mill to ring the camp." He tipped his head, squinting against the smoke of his cigarette. "It was a woman that called. She sounded like she was cryin'."

Rack said, "Broken River camp, please."

Inwardly he set himself for what he knew would come. Sam Horton was back in town. Will Jaspers had seen the man. And now—

"Rack!" It was Addie Tinker's voice, clouded and husky. "Rack, is that you?"

"Yes, Addie."

"The sheriff's been here, Rack. He's lookin' for you. He left a deputy here an' started for town when he found out you was on the log train. He—"

"Don't worry about it," Rack said. "I've been expecting this. Tell the man there he can come back to town. I'll go over to the—courthouse as soon as I'm through here."

"Rack," Addie whispered, "he says you—"

"Stop worrying," Rack said.

Big Red was waiting outside. Rack gave him a brief bleak nod.

*****★*****

GIRDLE NOTE

While in Detroit a woman gave her girdle to the scrap drive with this note pinned to it:

"If this could only make Hitler as uncomfortable as it made me, we'd win the war in a week."

*****★*****

"Let's go," he said, and the two of them set off down the track. Big Red muttered a curse. He yanked at his hatbrim, then he rubbed his jaw.

"Well," he said finally, "what's wrong?"

"Nothing much."

"Talkative, ain't yuh?"

There was plank beneath their feet now. Rack led the way down a steep-pitched stairway to a boat landing and a float. The tide was at flood. The river had a swollen and oily look. The mill lights were paths of yellow across the glossy black of it. Two hundred yards downstream they could see the rafted spruce. Dolphins, clusters of piling, stood in a well spaced row, paralleling the river bank. The scaler's houseboat was tied up between two of these, just short of the spruce rafts. The windows were dark.

Big Red said, "Funny he ain't got a light."

"Maybe he's not there."

"The hell he ain't there!" Big Red's voice turned rough. "I give him one goin' over, an' he knows he'll get another if he tries to run."

Rack said, "Let's look."

He led the way along the boom. The houseboat porch was deserted. Rack pounded on the door.

"Borg," he called, "open up!" And he waited, hearing only the restless scuff of Big Red's calks, the suck and rush of the water, the deep voice of River Mill.

"Let me try her," Big Red said.

He hammered the door with a clenched fist; he tried the knob. "She's locked," he said disgustedly. "That so-and-so blew the country."

Rack stepped past Big Red. He put his shoulder against the door. The flimsy panel bent inward under his lunging weight. Wood splintered and then the door snapped open.

"Borg," Rack said, "are you here?"

"You think we oughta bust in? You—"

"COME here, Red." Rack's voice was sharp. He waited until the big man was beside him before he said, "Do you smell it, Red?"

"Smell what? I—" Big Red stopped. He drew one great slow breath. "What the hell?" he said.

Rack struck a match with his thumbnail. The wavering flame pushed the dark away and they could see the littered room. A swirl of blankets hung from a wall bunk. There was a stove, a table, a lamp.

Rack lit the wick and turned it up. And behind him Big Red cursed in a voice that was choked.

"Rack, boy. Look here!"

Tony Borg lay in a corner, crumpled there. His face was hidden by an upthrown arm. His right hand was on his chest, the fingers twisted and caught in the cloth of his shirt—cloth that was black with an ugly stain. Rack moved to the man's side, crouched there. He touched Borg's hand; the flesh was cold.

"Shot," he said, "through the chest."

Big Red said, "Here's the gun."

The 30-30 carbine was on the floor, half hidden by the table. Big Red prodded the polished wood of the stock with his foot. "Likely it's Borg's gun," he said. "Seems I remember a 30-30 around here."

"I think you're right," Rack said.

"How come you knew there was somethin' wrong?"

"I've been out here before," Rack said. "Borg bached in this place whenever he had a river job; his door was never locked. That's why I wondered when it was tonight. After I broke it open, I got the smell of cordite."

Big Red let his breath go. "I'm the guy that's to blame for this," he said heavily. "I couldn't wait till we got all the dope on Borg; I had to come see him this afternoon. So now he's dead an' now he ain't ever goin' to talk. Sam Horton gets clean away from us. I'll bet good money Sam Horton's the guy that shot Borg."

"That will be hard to prove."

"What're we goin' to do now?"

"Call the sheriff," Rack said quietly.

"What about the spruce, boy? Borg was clippin' us on the scale. He was callin' our number one cull,

an' Lord knows what else. He stole us blind, but there's no way we can prove it now. We can't scale stuff that's gone through the mill an' been shipped."

"We'll worry about that later," Rack said. "Right now we'd better get that phoning done. You call. I'll wait here."

He made a casual search of the room when Big Red had gone. He poked through the papers in Borg's desk; he looked at the clothes hanging on wall hooks above the bunk—the hard-used clothes of a workman, save for a jacket of soft blond leather. Rack reached up and took this down, his eyes shiny with thought. And then there was voice sound out in the night. Rack dropped the blond jacket across the back of a chair and waited.

There were two men with Big Red. One was lean and brown and wore a deputy's star; the other was Bill Trindall, the sheriff. Trindall was perhaps forty, big and solidly made. His eyes were shrewd. He went past Rack to stand beside the body of Tony Borg.

"Tell me about it," he said at last.

Rack said, "We found him—just like that."

Billy Trindall said, "I see," and then turned to face Rack squarely. "I been looking for you since noon, Rack. I suppose you know that."

"I know it now," Rack said.

"I got a warrant for you."

"I'm ready to go." Rack's face was wooden, save for the inward crook of his lips. "Or I will be, as soon as I get a coat." He reached for the jacket on the chair back and Trindall spoke:

"I'll have a look at that first, son."

Big Red watched all this from a place near the door. There was bewilderment in his eyes. He wet his lips. "Warrant?" he said. "What's this all about?"

"Murder," Billy Trindall said.

He searched the jacket and found only a half package of cigarettes, a stub of cardboard. He replaced these and tossed the jacket to Rack.

"Let's go," he said.

Big Red said, "Hey! You can't—"

"I've got to, Red." There was faint regret in Trindall's voice. "The warrant I got charged Rack with the murder of Jed Horton, over Squaw Lake way, ten years ago." He looked at Rack. "Anything you say will be used against you."

"That doesn't matter," Rack said. "I've lived with this too long; I've had too much of keeping still. I'm the man you want. I killed him—"

BIG RED TINKER said, "What's the time?"

"About eight o'clock," Rack said.

He wadded a pillow at his back and watched Big Red resume his restless pacing. This was the seventh or eighth time he'd left his bunk to pace the cell.

"Clyde Prio'll be here soon," Big Red said. "Then we'll know where we stand—or maybe we will."

"Are you worried?" Rack asked. "Plenty," Big Red growled. "An' if you had the brains God gave a duck, you'd be worried too." He wet his lips; there was pleading in his rough voice. "You should've talked to Clyde last night. Clyde's tryin' to help you, boy."

"I know that, Red."

"Then why'd you play dumb?"

"You're wasting breath," Rack said quietly.

Big Red swore. "Stubborn an' pigheaded. So help me, I never seen anybody like you!" He rubbed his hands on his shirt front. "O. K.! But how's to tell me why this Jed Horton mess hangs fire for ten years?"

"Will Jaspers knew the whole story," Rack said. "He wanted me to buy him off. I wouldn't, so he sold what he knew to Sam Horton. Horton told Trindall."

Big Red said, "Jaspers! I knew there was something wrong with that guy. He didn't act like a white man; he didn't talk like one." He made fists of his huge hands. "If ever I get my hands on him—"

"You got your hands on one man. Remember?"

The breath went out of Big Red. "I been thinkin' about that," he said slowly. "I slapped Borg around to get him to talk. Borg was beat up some when I left, but he was a long way from bein' dead. I put the fear in him, boy. As quick's I was gone he called Sam Horton. An' Horton'd come a-runnin', wouldn't he? He's

the man that paid Borg to clip us, an' he's the man that'd be in trouble clean up to his neck if Borg told the district attorney what he told me."

Rack said, "Go on."

"Sam Horton shot Borg, boy."

"Can you prove that?"

"No."

Rack said, "Then forget it, Red."

Big Red Tinker rubbed his face. "Forget it?" he said. "Boy, you can't mean that. Horton paid Borg to rob us, didn't he?" He gave Rack a long, disgusted look. "You," he said—"what're you goin' to do?"

"Not a thing," said Rack.

Big Red's face turned thoughtful. He looked at the jacket of blond leather that lay on the foot of Rack's bunk. "So you ain't goin' to do a thing?" he said softly. "Boy, how's to give me one of them cigarettes?"

RACK took tobacco and papers from his pocket.

"No," Big Red said. "I want a tailor-made."

Rack's expression did not change. He leaned over and fished the half package of cigarettes from the jacket pocket. He flipped one to Big Red and Big Red weighed it in his hand.

"You roll your cigarettes," he said. "You left your coat on the loader. You don't own a jacket that color. You packed that one out o' Borg's houseboat."

Rack smiled. "Did I?"

And Clyde Prio came then, bundled in a greatcoat. He carried an



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armload of packages. He nodded at them as he waited for the jailer to unlock the door.

"It's cold out," he said.

Rack said, "Christmas isn't far away."

"Christmas." Big Red wet his lips and looked at Clyde. "I'd sure hate to spend Christmas in this joint."

"Maybe you won't," Clyde said.

"What about Rack—" Big Red began.

Prio spilled his packages on Rack's bunk. If he heard Big Red, he gave no sign. "I brought shaving gear and a couple of clean shirts," he said, "and shoes. You can't wear calks in the D. A.'s office."

"We're goin' up there?" Big Red said.

Clyde Prio nodded. "In a few minutes." He leaned against the cell wall, warming the bowl of a straight-stemmed brier in his hand. "When did the first log train head back for camp yesterday, Red?"

"Three or three thirty. Why?"

"I wondered," Prio said, and then turned his sober gaze to Rack. "You've had time to think it over, Rack. I hope you've changed your mind."

"I haven't," Rack said.

"You're making a mistake."

"I could be," Rack said.

"You say you killed Jed Horton," Clyde said. "You admitted that last night, before witnesses. And then you froze up. You wouldn't talk to me then; you won't talk to me now. Rack, this's the sheerest idiocy!"

"Yeah," Big Red said, "it's that."

PRIO tried again. "You can't stop the processes of law—no matter what you do. And you're not in this alone. There's the spruce to think of. There's—"

"The spruce." Rack's voice was matter-of-fact. "The sky line works, Clyde. We know that. Borg short-scaled us, but the next scaler will be honest. Big Red will see to that. You'll be able to meet the stumpage payments; the aircraft plants will get the spruce."

"What about Gale?" Prio said.

Rack's face turned wooden. "She's a grand gal," he said carefully, "but she doesn't come into this. You can change everything but my mind, Clyde. I killed Jed Horton. I've admitted it. But more than that—when, where, how, why—I'm sorry, Clyde, but I've nothing to say."

"You got a head full o' sawdust," Big Red said.

"He knows what he wants," Prio said. "The hearing this morning will be informal. Wiggam has to get the facts before he can present them to the grand jury. And, Rack, you'll find this is out of your hands now. You've a surprise coming."

Rack smiled faintly. "Could be."

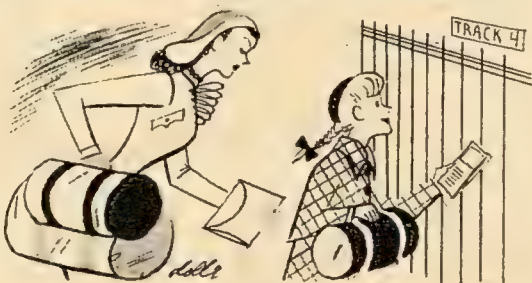
Why won't Rack talk about the murder? Whom is he shielding? Next week the truth comes out, and other problems are solved as the story ends.



By MARGARET FISHBACK

DEPARTMENT OF REDUNDANCY: Price Administrator Prentiss M. Brown has issued a 2,500-word press release announcing a reduction in the price of cabbage seeds. The text of the regulation contains this little gem under a sub-heading, Definitions: "Cabbage seed (*Brassica capitata*) is the seed used to grow cabbages." In case you've been in the dark about what cabbage seeds were likely to beget, this ought to clear things up nicely. Such preoccupation with superfluous language helps explain lots of OPA troubles. Naturally, what with worrying over cabbage seeds, the Administrator just hasn't time to do anything about the distribution of beef.

IF YOU MUST TRAVEL: A new trio of bags called Chuckful brings to mind Papa Bear, Mama Bear, and Baby Bear. Made of light-weight, water-repellent canvas, the family is composed of three roly-poly bags to replace heavy luggage, a blessing in crowded stations with no redcap on the horizon. They hold a lot, come in five spirited color combinations, and



may be bought separately if you don't need all three. The 12-inch is \$2.95, the 16-inch Mama is \$4.95, and 21-inch Papa is \$5.95. At Bloomingdale's in New York. Virginia Blake thought them up, and managed to produce them without using any priority materials such as zippers and snaps.

INSPIRATIONAL NOTE: Joe Alger and Stan Jones, both gifted writers and wags of the first water, have concocted the world's most relaxed motto for decorating home or office. Nicely embellished with strange animals reminiscent of Dr. Seuss, it reads: THEY SAID IT COULDN'T BE DONE, SO I DIDN'T EVEN TRY.

LOVELORN: One of Manhattan's prettiest career girls can't get the man she wants, but she won't give up. Says she, "I oughtn't to care for him—he's one of those fair-weather boys. When he's hurt me and I'm no fun, he goes where the fun is. But I want him and I'm persistent. It'll

take long, diplomatic work to get him, but I'll stick with it, because, even though he's selfish, he's adjustable, and I'm stuck on him." . . . And one of Manhattan's most eligible bachelors can't get the girl he wants. He has even attempted suicide, but with ignominious results. When he climbed out on her ninth-floor windowsill and announced that he was going to jump unless she promised



to marry him, her peremptory retort was, "Get off that windowsill. What do you think you are, a bird?" He obeyed meekly, but was horrified to discover he had given *himself* such a fright he became violently sick right there in the presence of his sardonic ladylove.

Program for a New Mother

Bottle, porridge, spoon it in,
Catch it nimbly on the chin.
Change his little pants, and then
Change his little pants again.
Sterilize each cap and nipple,
That the lad may safely tipple.
Bathe and oil the chubby lamb,
Change and air him in his pram.
Now it's clear the tiny tot'll
Gladly have another bottle.
Now the time grows ripe and riper
For another change of diaper.

MECHANICAL GENIUS: Rube Goldberg cheered me up a whole lot when he reported that he knew a feller who admitted that a pair of scissors was as complicated a mechanism as he could figure out. I'm not even up to that, so it took me quite a while to memorize how to set my camera with the help of a light meter. I'm frank to say I had to learn it by heart, for I never could understand any part of the photographic process. Even so, I have at last encountered an individual even more pinheaded in the field of machinery. I overheard her in the camera department at Macy's when she handed her camera to a clerk and begged piteously, "Set the light, time, and distance so I can take pictures of my bulldog in Buffalo on my vacation. You fix it for a sunny day and for me to be eight feet away from him."

ATLANTIC CONVOY

Continued from Page 17

grew a shadow which had not been there before.

The deck officer called sharply, "He's surfacing!"

Yes, there he was—long and low and dark in the moonlight, the brilliant little waves shimmering against his rolling decks. And he was almost motionless.

Events moved with incredible swiftness.

The "talker," the signalman who walked about the bridge with a telephone hung about his neck, in instant communication with every corner of the ship, spoke clearly: "Lookout reports dark object dead ahead, sir."

But before he had finished the captain was warning our companion destroyer to get out of the way:

"Corona to Bison. Target on surface. Stand clear. I shall illuminate and fire."

There were two reasons for illuminating. We must have a good look at that target, to be certain it was the enemy. A split second would suffice to show that it was not a boatload of castaways drifting across by chance, or a straggling cargo ship lost from its course. That second would serve its usefulness, also, for the gun pointers.

We veered and brought ourselves broadside onto that dark shadow. The signalmen were ready at the immense searchlights. We held our hands to our ears in preparation for the shattering salvo of our four five-inch guns. But, in the single breath between the completion of our half-turn and the burst of lights and guns, the executive officer sang out: "He's going down! He's submerging, captain!"

He was gone.

The searchlights and the guns were useless. He was too far off for us to bear down upon him and attempt to crash into him with our stem and sink him.

BUT at that moment a lieutenant thrust his head through the narrow door leading to the cubbyhole which contained the sound apparatus.

"Contact, sir! Dead ahead. Submerged. Range 3,100 yards."

The captain spoke to the helmsman. "Steady as you go." He lifted the TBS telephone, telling Bison that we still had strong contact with the target. And then we began the run of that 3,100 yards. We could not race on at high exciting speed. The noise of our own engines, the boiling of our wake, would have interfered with the sound reception. We had to move at what seemed a crawling pace. And behind us, in the little room, the man at the controls of the detector spun his wheels, kept his dials adjusted to a hairsbreadth. We could hear the musical "ping" repeating itself at steady intervals.

The captain murmured, "Anyway, he didn't have time to use his radio."

The exec said, "He couldn't have broken his aerals out before he spotted us and ducked out of there." Then he said, "But, damn him, he did suck in a little air."

The captain said, "We'll try to take it away from him."

We seemed hardly moving and there was not a sound on the decks of our ship.

The captain spoke to the torpedo officer: "Your depth charges ready, Mr. Murray?"

"Ready, sir."

There was the faintest hint of a catch in the young officer's voice. Two years ago he had been graduated from Marquette University as a mechanical engineer and metallurgist. Before he could take his first job, he was ordered, by reason of his training in the Naval Reserve, to report for sea duty. He got his commission, and then he married a dark laughing girl whose picture hung over his bunk somewhere in the darkness below decks. Now he was ready to give the brief signal which would send an unholy quantity of TNT over the sides of his ship—and if matters went well, that TNT would blast fifty or sixty or seventy men into eternity.

The captain lifted the telephone. "Corona to Bison. We are dropping a full pattern of depth charges."

"Bison to Corona. Good luck."

The voice from the sound room said, "Nine hundred yards dead ahead, sir."

And now, with brief barked orders, we hooked up speed. We were committed to the target. And when we let go that stuff riding on our fantail and cradled in our X-guns we would have to get the hell out of there fast or be blown up ourselves.

There was a rush of wind in the darkness. The water turned white at our bows. And the captain said, "Release your charges, Mr. Murray."

Some endless seconds later, wild shattering thunders shook the ocean and the air above the ocean and wrenched our ship in every frame of her. For these were no holiday charges, set to explode at shallow depths and fling up the white geysers which make such pretty pictures. These let go far down. And we staggered, reaching for handrails to steady ourselves.

Behind us, receding in our wake, three or four pin points of smoky flame lit up. These were floating lights which we had tossed over to mark the spot where we had fired.

Our companion called us: "Bison to Corona. If you hold to your course we'll make a run over your lights and see what we can see."

"Corona to Bison. Understood."

Minutes went by, and Bison called us again: "We're over your lights. We get a very strong smell of oil here, but we can't see much. We get no sound contact."

Nor did we get one. But then, we couldn't get that "ping" out of him if he didn't exist any longer.



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ABOUT
RUPTURE

BROOKS COMPANY 210-B State St., Marshall, Mich.

Which was all the satisfaction we got until a few more hours had passed and the dawn began to break. We drank coffee in the wardroom. The doctor and the exec tried their hands at a game of acey-deucey. And a dark, exceedingly quiet lieutenant (j. g.) let me drag his story out of him.

He was twenty-five years old, and his first destroyer had been one of the old four-pipers out in the Pacific. That ship and another one just like it had been sent out one day to reconnoiter and raise the enemy if possible. This was during certain rather dark days for our Navy, when hazardous missions had to be undertaken by insufficient forces. The two old destroyers were certainly insufficient to cope with the five Jap cruisers which presently came over the horizon. They were not fast enough to run away—and I shivered listening to the story of how they tried to slug it out with those cruisers, matching their pitiful little guns against the heavy salvos which came screaming at them.

OUR lieutenant was lucky. He was ordered aft for some duty or other a few seconds before six direct hits blew apart the bridge of his ship. The other destroyer had already gone down. And our lieutenant found himself in the water, clinging to a wooden raft, one of the only two officers to survive the action. Jap planes came over then, and lazily picked out good targets for their machine guns—heads bobbing in the water, rafts which were almost wholly submerged. That went on for about two hours, and there was a great deal of dying. Navy planes finally arrived to control the situation, and the handful who still lived in the water were hauled out of it.

I said to our lieutenant (who was Al Gallin of New York, of the Jewish faith), "I suppose the Atlantic looks pretty good to you for a change."

He shook his head, with the curious wistful smile he had. "No. I don't like the rough weather here. Out there the sea is nearly always smooth. And, anyway, there are a couple of movies I haven't seen in the Pacific—"

His need to get back his own out there, to collect as best he might some payment for the savage destruction which had been dealt to his friends, was neither vengeful nor heroic nor, indeed, much connected with the emotions in any way. It was simply an inner compulsion, like the daily need for a drink of water.

Word came down from the bridge that the dawn was breaking.

When we got up there, Bison was about a mile off, and the two of us were slowly circling an immense oil slick. There were large chunks of cork floating in the oil. (Submarines are insulated by sheets of cork between their inner and outer hulls.) There were beer bottles, and other debris.

That was all the visual evidence we had. And all of us knew that, by itself, such evidence was not conclusive. U-boat commanders sometimes cannily release blobs of oil and debris. And then they lie snugly, far down, while newcomers to the business of hunting them slap each other's backs and go boiling off over the horizon to report a victory.

But we were pretty sure we had him. The target had been perfect, to begin with. There was more oil and more debris than any submarine was likely to release deliberately. But we had to be more certain than that—not for the sake of our own vain-glorious claims but for the sake of that convoy plowing on up ahead.

So we stayed on the scene for many, many hours, searching in accordance with a careful preconceived plan.

That plan is based upon simple facts:

A submarine, submerged, can run at his full speed of about ten miles an hour for about one hour. That is to say, he couldn't get more than ten miles away before his batteries would be out and he would have to surface and recharge them with his Diesel engines. Or he could run, say, for six hours at a speed of two miles an hour. That would take him only twelve miles away. Or he could lurk about, using his batteries only enough to keep his trim, for as much as a full day before having to come up.

Under any of these conditions, two destroyers can keep him hemmed within a twenty-five-mile circle as long as he chooses to stay below the surface. And they are practically certain to pick him up on their sound detectors sooner or later.

And when he surfaces? He will still be well within range of detection equipment. And he's a dead pigeon.

Ours gave, on our detecting apparatus, no indication whatever of continuing existence. Which, coupled with the stuff we had seen floating after our depth charges, seemed to indicate that his existence had terminated.

IT was by such technique that the Navy, by the early summer of 1943, had accomplished one critical job in the war against the submarine: it had forced him to stay under water. All of his great victories against cargo ships had come while he had been free to operate as a swift surface boat. For on the surface he can move faster than most freight vessels. Now he was forced down, where he must operate at very slow speeds for a limited time. And the detection devices had made even the reaches beneath the sea an exceedingly hazardous hiding place.

It took us a number of hours of high-speed running to rejoin our convoy. But it had been by no means unprotected in our absence. Other destroyers had remained on the job with it.

THE DUCK HUNTER

The poor duck hunter in his blind
Is chilled in front and wet be-
hind!

It's seven hours since he fed,
And twenty since he's been to
bed.

It's cost him near a hundred
bucks

To hide here from the silly ducks,
Which presently, ere day dawns
dim,

Will rise and hide themselves
from him!

—MARY WARD.



There were many, many cargo vessels in that convoy. Enough time has passed for me to say that the goods they carried were critically important to the Sicilian invasion. They carried more than half a million tons of such goods: aviation gasoline and machine guns, canned foods and cased ammunition, frozen meat and plane engines and rubber tires and tractors. Every ship was loaded to the last inch of its cargo holds, and besides, lashed to the decks as extra cargo, we could see whole trains—locomotives and coal tenders, cars and coaches, steel rails and bridge sections. We could see planes and tractors, motor landing barges, trucks and half-tracs.

And this is what I wish to say:

We were a slow convoy. We moved at a worm's pace, dictated by the slowest ship among us, with all that priceless stuff. German submarines knew where we were most of the time, and indeed were close over the horizon most of the time. And yet never once did any submarine bring his torpedo tubes within firing range of any merchantman in that great column. Not one shot was fired into our convoy. They lurked on our fringes, the U-boats—we knew that as a simple fact, as will appear—yet never did one of them dare to come in for the kill.

That is the victory of the Atlantic.

ALL of us can remember the days, not long ago, when it seemed that victory could never be won, when we were losing millions of tons of merchant shipping, when U-boats were sinking more vessels than our yards could build in replacement. Now even the Germans report that only twenty Allied cargo ships were sunk in the Atlantic last July, when thousands of them were moving in the convoys. And you have read the report of Mr. Roosevelt and Mr. Churchill saying that we sank ninety of those U-boats in the three summer months—one a day.

The victory was won not by desperate measures but by thoughtful, shrewd methods. It was won by three things: the enormous improvement in secret detection methods, the perfection of destroyer-escort tactics, and the invaluable extension of air coverage.

Here is the way I saw it work:

As soon as our convoy was formed up at one of the Atlantic ports, the escort vessels fell into their positions—ahead, far out on the flanks, and astern. They were under the command of an escort commodore who was in constant voice communication with them through TBS. All of the detection apparatus was turned on.

From the very beginning we ranged back and forth, using our speed to weave and zigzag in long, endless sweeps—sometimes out of sight of the vessels we were guarding, covering an immense area of sea. At fixed intervals one or another of the destroyers would sweep all around the convoy, twenty miles away from it. And all this meant that no submarine could come within firing range of the cargo vessels without first being detected by a destroyer and then sinking that destroyer in order to get through. And the marvel is that this fact held as true in the darkness as it did in daytime.

We don't depend any longer on eagle eyes picking up the feather of a periscope.

For a considerable period after we steamed away from America we had shore-based air coverage. Navy blimps and flying boats circled slowly over us, casting out toward the horizon and back again, although their usefulness is not great at night.

There were days upon end, of course, when we were without air coverage altogether. But at the critical moments it would appear. We could hear their engines again, and flash greetings with our blinker lights as they soared overhead. These would be the planes from the B ships

—the little carriers converted from cargo vessels. I do not know how many of them we have at sea now. But we have enough for them to appear, Johnny on the spot, on those nervous days when everybody knows the subs are thick around.

And how does everybody know that? Because of the superb flow of information which comes in over the wireless.

Our people ashore know where the submarines are—could show you, on their big maps, the approximate locations of hundreds and hundreds of them at any given hour of the day. And you may be sure they are not slow to tell us. The messages come in a steady stream. And when the codes are broken down we get little blue slips which read like this:

SUBMARINE OPERATING AT LATITUDE X
X LONGITUDE X

SUBMARINE ATTACKING CARGO STRAG-
GLER AT LATITUDE X LONGITUDE X

THREE SUBMARINES HAVE JUST RE-
FUELED AT LATITUDE X LONGITUDE X.

If the latitude and longitude—which is to say, the precise location of the enemy vessel—is too far away to interest us, we simply hang the blue slips on the file and forget them. But often enough they are news of submarines very close to us indeed, and then life on the destroyer quickens, vigilance is screwed a notch tighter.

I remember one blue slip. It said:

WOLF PACK TEN SUBMARINES 200
MILES NORTH YOUR PRESENT POSITION.
SIX HAVE JUST REFUELED AT SEA. ALL
MOVING ON SURFACE, COURSE ———

(Giving their course, which I cannot repeat here.)

If they continued as they were moving, their course and our convoy's would converge in about eleven hours. And they did continue—which is a story that belongs a little farther along in this report.

HOW do our people ashore know so precisely of the enemy's movements? I can only say to you that submarines must use their radios to report to their own headquarters, to ask for orders, to ask for more fuel, to tell of sighting convoys like ours moving along the sea tracks. We have people listening in a good many places for those brief moments of dit-dah. And they are able to make certain very exact and very helpful calculations.

The life of a convoy is the life of a very sizable floating and moving city, a city living most literally on a keg of dynamite. I must tell you about the lad from a merchantman whom we had to take aboard and perform a major surgical operation upon, that day in latitude X, longitude X.

Mr. Markey will tell you that—and a whole lot more!—as he concludes his account of the U-boat hunt in Liberty next week.

LIBERTY GOES TO THE MOVIES

BY HARRIET GOULD

THOUSANDS CHEER

(M-G-M)
All-Star Cast

WHEN Joan Crawford, after years of star status, finally left the M-G-M pasture a couple of months ago, busybodies in the trade brought up the idea that now all Metro's famous gallery of glamour stars (that once included Garbo, Jeanette MacDonald, etc.) had moved on to other fields.

Thousands Cheer will certainly spike that rumor, for, with the exception of Hedy Lamarr, and a few men in service, Metro has thrown their all into this one—and that's plenty.

Out of this horn of plenty, in vivid Technicolor, pours an abundance of Metro's big names and a few surprises—like the very successful debut of José Iturbi, noted concert pianist—the whole tied together with a thin but appealing story that is just lightly sprinkled with corn.

Most of the movie takes place in an Army camp where Kathryn Grayson (whose simple good looks and voice will remind you of Deanna Durbin) is busy boosting morale as the colonel's daughter. She's given up a successful singing career with Iturbi to become chief hostess in the streamlined servicemen's canteen. There she falls in love with and reforms an attractive rugged individualist (Gene Kelly). She also reconciles her bickering parents (John Boles and Mary Astor). With all that going on she also finds time to promote a colossal revue for the boys—the all-star (all-Metro) kind that descends on Army camps only in the movies.

Mickey Rooney mugs his way through the revue as m. c. and introduces the various skits (one has Frank Morgan pursuing Glamour Girls Ann Sothorn, Lucille Ball, and Marsha Hunt—and there's a side-splitting sequence by Red Skelton); dance numbers (Eleanor Powell, and Broadway's Don Loper and Maxine Barrat with their mock ballet routine); name bands (Kay Kyser and Bob Crosby); singers (Lena Horne and dead-pan Virginia O'Brien), etc. The music runs the gamut from swing to Shostakovich, but a solid boogie-woogie collaboration by long-hair Iturbi and Judy Garland (The Joint Is Really Jumpin' Down at Carnegie Hall) is the musical topper of the film.

These combined operations make for a whopper of a show, but they do result in a pretty long movie.

Covering such a broad scope of entertainment, Thousands Cheer is bound to have something pleasing for every one—and sometimes it even seems like too much.



Kathryn Grayson leaves her singing career with Iturbi to return with her father, John Boles, to his Army base.



Kathryn takes over the duties of running the canteen at the base—and falls in love with Private Gene Kelly.



As part of her duties in the canteen, Kathryn runs a mammoth revue—with Red Skelton at his best in one of the skits.



GREER GARSON



HENRY FONDA

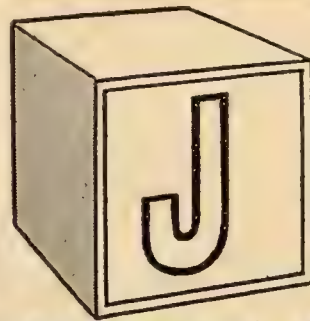


ROSALIND RUSSELL

PICTURES WORTH SEEING

FILM	GIST	LIBERTY SAID:
BEST FOOT FORWARD (M-G-M) Lucille Ball, William Gaxton	<i>Musical comedy</i> (a glamorous movie star spends a hectic week-end at a boys' military academy).	From the Broadway play . . . fresh-as-paint production numbers . . . good tunes . . . nicely paced and thoroughly entertaining. (8-14-43)
CLAUDIA (20th Century-Fox) Dorothy McGuire Robert Young Ina Claire	<i>Comedy-drama</i> (a pair of newlyweds discover that being adult doesn't mean you're grown up).	A good picture . . . sentimental, humorous, and real as apple pie . . . a solid treat . . . McGuire rates huzzas. (9-25-43)
DIXIE (Paramount) Bing Crosby, Dorothy Lamour	<i>Musical</i> (the development of the art of minstrelsy—via the life of Dan Emmett, first minstrel).	Not up to Bing's other pictures . . . too much "formula" . . . vague story makes it merely mediocre. (7-24-43)
FOR WHOM THE BELL TOLLS (Paramount) Ingrid Bergman, Gary Cooper, Katina Paxinou	<i>Drama</i> (the screen version of Ernest Hemingway's great novel of love and war in Spain).	One of the <i>must</i> pictures of this or any other year . . . long, perhaps, but superb in action and direction. Breath-taking Technicolor. (8-28-43)
HEAVEN CAN WAIT (20th Century-Fox) Don Ameche, Gene Tierney, Charles Coburn	<i>Comedy-drama</i> (a man dies and applies for admittance to hell, sure heaven won't have him. He tells the story of his life).	Delightful and adult satire . . . moves at a sprightly pace . . . good cast . . . witty and subtle situations and dialogue. (8-21-43)
LASSIE COME HOME (M-G-M) Roddy McDowall, Donald Crisp, Dame May Whitty	<i>Drama</i> (the poignant story of the love and devotion of a dog for her master. Taken from the late Eric Knight's novel classic).	A natural for children and an unsophisticated extra treat for adults . . . superb acting . . . beautiful Technicolor. (10-16-43)
LET'S FACE IT (Paramount) Bob Hope, Betty Hutton	<i>Comedy</i> (three soldiers gigolo three women for \$300. But their fiancées find out—and so do their dates' husbands!).	From the Fields-Cole Porter musical . . . not quite up to other Hope films, but good chuckle provoker . . . worth catching. (9-18-43)
SO PROUDLY WE HAIL (Paramount) Claudette Colbert, Veronica Lake, Paulette Goddard	<i>Drama</i> (the stirring story of the first American women at the front lines—Army nurses on Bataan).	Vital . . . authentic and stirring war film . . . casting is just about perfect. (8-7-43)
THANK YOUR LUCKY STARS (Warner Bros.) All-star cast	<i>Musical</i> (the Warner Brothers' parade of stars—set to music with just a hint of plot).	Bette Davis, Ida Lupino, Humphrey Bogart, etc., lampoon themselves . . . good music . . . super (mis)cast. (10-9-43)
THE CITY THAT STOPPED HITLER—STALINGRAD (Paramount)	<i>Documentary</i> (a dramatic record of the 162-day Battle of Stalingrad).	Double-checked <i>must</i> on your list . . . you'll cheer . . . your first chance to see Russia's secret rocket weapon. (10-16-43)
THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA (Universal) Nelson Eddy, Claude Rains, Susanna Foster	<i>Musical</i> (a remake of the old Lon Chaney classic—but with much more music and much less horror).	A pleasant musical melodrama with only minor gruesome counterpoint. (10-2-43)
THIS IS THE ARMY (Warner Bros.) U. S. Army	<i>Musical</i> (movie version of those two great all-soldier shows—Yip Yip, Yaphank and This Is the Army).	As good as the original—and better in spots . . . heart-warming film packed solid with entertainment. (9-11-43)
WATCH ON THE RHINE (Warner Bros.) Paul Lukas, Bette Davis	<i>Drama</i> (the story of an anti-Fascist who fights and lives for freedom).	Sensitive, intelligent movie . . . has depth and significance . . . wonderful script, acting . . . one of the year's best. (9-4-43)

It's a
BIG PICTURE



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Judy Canova
in

SLEEPY LAGOON



with
DENNIS DAY
Ruth Donnelly
Joe Sawyer Ernest Truex
Douglas Fowley
MIKE RILEY
and his ORCHESTRA

Showered with Songs:
Sleepy Lagoon
Political Satire
If You Are There
You're The Very
Fondest Thing I Am Of
I'm Not Myself Anymore

FLASH! Watch for Republic's IN OLD OKLAHOMA

Glorifying the romantic pioneer spirit of America
BACK THE ATTACK—BUY WAR BONDS AND STAMPS

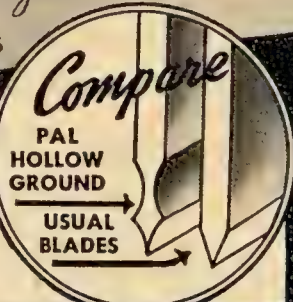
It's a
REPUBLIC PICTURE

There's nothing Private about what this **PRIVATE** says:

In the army we shave on the double. Thanks to Pal I get a good shave, first time over even with cold water. The boys in my outfit agree.
Joseph Everlin

ARMY AIR CORPS

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No "bearing down"—they're flexible in the razor—shave with just a "Feather Touch."



PAL

"hollow-ground"
RAZOR BLADES



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If you—like so many women between the ages of 38 and 52—suffer from hot flashes, weak, tired nervous feelings, are a bit blue at times—due to the functional middle age period peculiar to women—try Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound—to relieve such symptoms.

Taken regularly — Pinkham's Compound helps build up resistance against such distress. It also is a fine stomachic tonic. Follow label directions. Well worth trying!

LYDIA E. PINKHAM'S VEGETABLE COMPOUND

(Continued from page 59)

off, no one gets on," he told me, keeping his gun pointed toward me. "And those orders stand until the colonel tells me different."

I didn't have to ask where the colonel was, because I could see a full-fledged argument going on back near the entrance of Mr. Roosevelt's private car. I went back through the train, and found that the colonel and his earnest young troops would not allow the Secret Service to put out its usual line of agents around that car. Neither would they allow a frantic railroad flagman to set out his flares at the end of the train, as required by safety regulations.

Chief Frank R. Wilson, head of the entire Secret Service organization, finally argued the colonel into seeing the error of his ways, and he grudgingly let the Secret Service men take up their posts. Later he heard from the War Department that the object on such an assignment was to keep unauthorized persons from approaching the train.

The man who makes the White House detail of the Secret Service click is Supervising Agent M. F. (Mike) Reilly, little known to the public but famous around the White House for his pin-point thoroughness and his ability to go days without sleep. When Mr. Roosevelt starts on a long trip, it is only after Reilly, a hard-boiled Irishman still in his thirties, has personally covered every stop on the route two or three times in advance. Reilly will swing a friendly but vigorous punch at the man who reminds him he was once known as the "most handsome" at George Washington University. Behind his cocky Irish pan, however, lies a tremendous amount of police ability. That is why no person with the slightest taint of suspicion on his record can get within shouting distance of the White House or the President if Reilly or his men know of it—and they generally do know.

REILLY probably worries more about his job than Mr. Roosevelt does about his. A few minutes after the news of Pearl Harbor broke, Mike was speeding from his home to the White House. Carefully worked-out plans, then on paper, were put into action the moment he jumped from his roadster there. For security reasons, the elaborate program of wartime precautions at the White House cannot be divulged in any detail beyond mentioning the heavy military guard that is on the grounds around the clock, and saying that the program centers on protection from air raids, bombs, and gas.

It was Reilly who "cased" Mr. Roosevelt's route to Casablanca and supervised the protection set-up which surrounded the villa where the President and Churchill conferred. At almost every stop on the itinerary, suspicious characters and known enemy sympathizers were rounded up and "kept on ice" until the President was safely back in

Washington. Before the President made his 8,000-mile war-plant tour in 1942, Reilly covered the route three times by airplane.

Mr. Roosevelt's closest Secret Service contact is with his personal bodyguard Charles Fredericks, a blue-eyed, white-haired old-timer. Charlie is within a few feet of "the boss" from the time the President awakes in the morning until he settles down in his residential quarters of the White House for the evening.

Another important cog in the Secret Service organization is James Sloan, the astute sixty-seven-year-old crank expert whose service on the White House assignment dates back to the days when another Roosevelt, Theodore, was there. Jimmy Sloan had a busy night on December 7, 1941, when great crowds collected in front of the White House to gawk at government leaders as they rushed in and out during those first hectic hours after Pearl Harbor. There were inventors of death rays, people with plans for immediate peace. Jimmy's little office looked like a mental clinic on a busy day. But there was only one troublemaker—a boy stripped to the waist in the cold December night and bearing a sledge hammer. He wanted to "persuade" the President to restore his WPA job in New Jersey!

JIMMY still winces when he thinks back to the dreary day a few winters ago when a man demanding a personal audience with the President was ushered into his little office.

"What's troubling you, brother?" he asked, peering at the man through trifocal spectacles.

"I've got to see the President," said the man, in a familiar beginning to such stories—Jimmy hears hundreds of them every year. Then the man told an incoherent story about enemy spies on his trail, saying he had to warn the Chief Executive.

Jimmy calmly asked him about a bulge in his overcoat pocket.

"In my business you have to be prepared for anything," he said, placing a .45 automatic on Jimmy's desk.

Jimmy picked up the gun and dropped it in a desk drawer.

The man sneered at him, snarling, "Now, you don't think I'm that dumb, do you?" and reached into his coat again. Out came another automatic.

Jimmy put that one away, too. "You're pretty smart," he admitted.

"Yeah! Let me show you how I've outwitted these foreign agents."

And the man pulled a third gun!

Dropping that gun in the desk, Jimmy shook his head in amazement. "I'll tell you something, brother," he said. "The President is mighty busy today. But why don't you and I take a little ride and talk this whole thing over?"

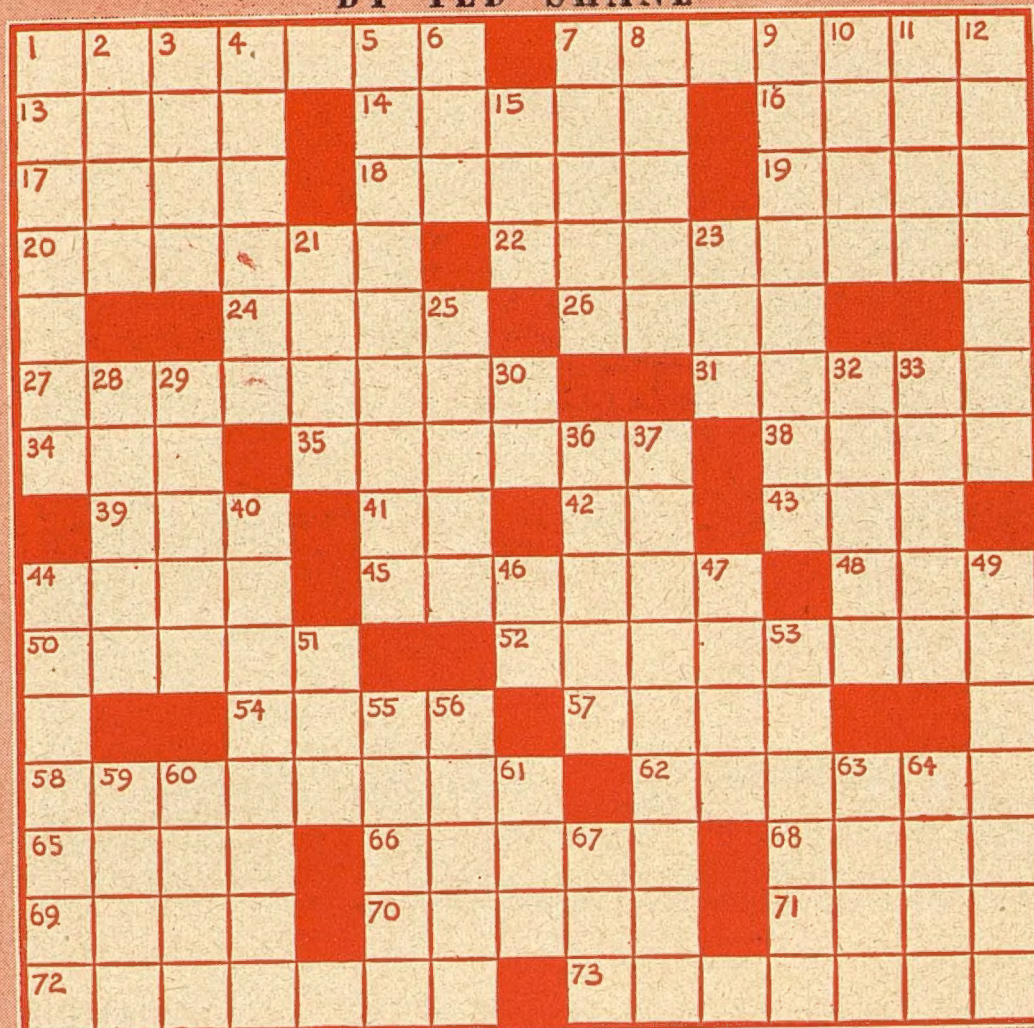
It was not until the three-gun man was safely tucked away in a psychopathic ward that he began to question Jimmy Sloan's understanding and sympathy.

THE END

LIBERTY

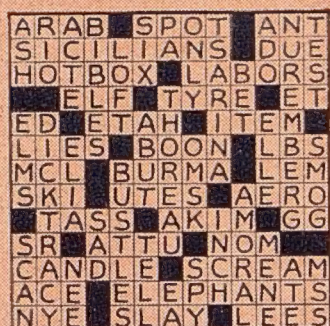
COCKEYED CROSSWORDS

BY TED SHANE



HORIZONTAL

- 1 World's leading whole-sale butcher
- 7 Has his fling among the Booze Who
- 13 Grant this one was a generally uncivil warrior (two words)
- 14 Desert station wagon
- 16 De Gaulle says the this with Germania
- 17 Let things slide
- 18 Toscanini ties packages with it
- 19 Man with head like a mump
- 20 Pick-up
- 22 After this, you say Hootchie-kootchie-kootchie
- 24 Shutter up, then watch developments
- 26 Horse going with a jerk
- 27 Hunks of wholes
- 31 Day it snows bills
- 34 Have in Scotland
- 35 They stagger under the white man's bourbon
- 38 Vot der Berliner iss scared out uff nights
- 39 Soviet Republicans' Alliance (abbr.)
- 41 Ain't not
- 42 Icy Annie (abbr.)
- 43 Madam Adam
- 44 Naughty little fairy
- 45 Sing-songs, any choir'll take one
- 48 A bit of a naval man
- 50 What Germans're keep-ing on today
- 52 Strip teaser who went a little too far
- 54 The Magnificent Junk Pile (It.)
- 57 Wench



Last week's answer

- 58 He plays with his feet and makes the most beautiful sounds with his pipes
- 62 Guy who can be brutal-itarian or utilitarian
- 65 Small state (abbr.; double talk)
- 66 It's hot but it's cool
- 68 Debump the highway
- 69 German plasma
- 70 First order of the month: Attention, bill payers!
- 71 Man in a green turban
- 72 Asiatic wh-o-o-o-wh-o-o-o!
- 73 Seagoing station wagons

VERTICAL

- 1 It'll take you out of this world
- 2 After this, you Chase her
- 3 Chinese chow
- 4 Insert the schnozz into none of your biz
- 5 Jerky
- 6 Bark for the Bulldog; roar for the Lion
- 7 Shell on French nuts
- 8 What you get only out-side, never inside
- 9 It's positively not positive

- 10 A good wife beater
- 11 The flaming St.
- 12 Explosive communiqués
- 15 What the well armed woman is wielding on the home front
- 21 Be good for a V till payday
- 23 Cough in simp. sp.
- 25 Throttle the tonsils!
- 28 It fronts for Dali during his smear campaigns
- 29 French glass
- 30 Disemvoweled offspring of heaven
- 32 Safety pin for pinning up steel braces
- 33 Underwood pecker (colloq.)
- 36 Knots in the spinal cord
- 37 A star's stooge
- 40 They're causing a big underground movement in Germany (two words)
- 44 Kind of big shot with a camera
- 46 This can make Al sad
- 47 Twist around
- 49 They blow whistles and blast all night
- 51 It's heavy and not back-ward
- 53 Set ape can be made into a stockade (anagram)
- 55 This kind of phone gets a lot of plugs
- 56 Shean becomes quite white here (anagram)
- 59 Richest yet poorest West Indian port (abbr.)
- 60 A flash in the pan
- 61 Irish man and boy
- 63 Grammaw may've been one, but she's just abroad to me
- 64 Sin's mom and pop
- 67 54 and half living

The answer to this puzzle will appear in next week's issue.

JUST BETWEEN OURSELVES



FOR A YEAR NOW

Colonel Stoopnagle, whose genial countenance smiles at you here, has been giving us the fruits of his linguistic inspiration in his famous Fictionary. Otherwise, he's much occupied on the radio, and shuttling back and forth between South Norwalk, Connecticut, where he lives, and New York, where he gives. Those of our readers who try to match his wits in word coinage will be interested to hear that this rival of Dr. Johnson and Noah Webster is planning a book. From what we gather, it's going to be a mind-tickler as well as a rib one.

YOUNG RICHARD LAUTERBACH,

whose profile of Elmer Davis is in this issue, was on his way to Russia as we went to press. He's going after personality material and hopes to get some real close-ups of its great leaders. More power to his arm! At Dartmouth he edited the Jack-o'-Lantern, one of the best college-humor periodicals, and was a classmate of Budd Schulberg, whose book, What Makes Sammy Run, grew out of a Liberty short story. Lauterbach tackled sports stories first, but subsequently found he had a better gift for word portraits.

IT'S NICE TO HAVE

Walter Brooks with us again, and his Should Old Acquaintance Be Forgot? will amuse you, we feel sure. He has a light, deft touch and a whimsical imagination. Remember Ed, the Talking Horse, who galloped and gamboled through our pages over a period of several years?

THE EDITORS.



WE'VE GOT ANOTHER GOAL TO MEET

NOW that the Third War Loan is out of the way, Americans have another job to tackle before they can enjoy Thanksgiving and Christmas with an easy national conscience.

It's a job as vital in its own way as the War Loan and we are just as determined to put it over the top.

At the request of the President, the fund-raising activities of seventeen war-connected relief organizations have been united in one nation-wide effort, the National War Fund. Its purpose is to raise and distribute adequate funds to meet the requirements of all the organizations which otherwise would be forced to appeal individually to the American people.

The drive now under way, from October 1 to December 1, has as its goal \$125,000,000. It is not a vast sum of money as war expenditures go, but it will be effective far beyond its size in relieving the impact on human beings of this terrible war. It will be used to provide recreational facilities for our men in the services—soldiers, sailors, and merchant seamen; to relieve the corroding, stagnant idleness of those of our boys who are captured by the enemy and keep them supplied with the food necessary for health; to ease civilian distress in the countries of our allies and in those areas overrun by the enemy; to save

the lives of refugees and to care for children made homeless by the war.

None of these activities can be handled by government agencies. Their job is to carry on the war. Lend-Lease can provide war material and food for fighting armies, but caring for the homeless and hungry is the duty of private relief organizations.

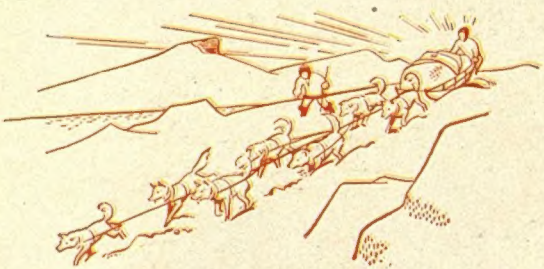
Civilized people help each other out. In fact, the extent to which the people of a nation respond to appeals for help from others less fortunate than themselves is a measure of the degree of civilization they have attained. In this respect Americans have gained for themselves the reputation of being the most civilized people in the world. Not only have we always been ready to go to town on fund-raising drives for our own organized charities, but catastrophe among our own people or elsewhere in the world always finds us ready to extend cash as well as sympathy to the victims.

Despite high taxes, Lend-Lease, and all other contributions of a financial nature we are making to this war, no American would curtail one bit of the work of the various war relief agencies. We want these activities continued. In fact, we insist upon their continuance. If it costs us each another five-dollar bill, we consider it well spent. Get *your* contribution in early.

Paul Hunter

From Dog Team to Airplane in the Battle of the Arctic

A GRAND OLD CANADIAN NAME



1861 Americans from schooner "United States" used sledges to journey within 8.65° of the North Pole in Grinnell Land. At that time, Corby's had a three-year-old reputation as a fine whiskey.



1882 A group sailing under the American flag crossed Robeson Channel, traveled to farthest point reached by man: 6.75° from the North Pole. Corby's was then in its 24th year of fame in Canada.



1928 A dirigible crew from Spitzbergen gave Arctic inhabitants their first view of aircraft, reached the North Pole in a few hours. In 1928, Corby's reached its 70th year as a famous whiskey name.



1939 U. S. Expedition established a base in the South Pacific, traveled by ship and plane to map wide areas of the Antarctic. Corby's by then had been a highly regarded whiskey name for over 80 years.



PRODUCED IN U. S. A. under the direct supervision of our expert Canadian blender.

Future Arctic exploration waits on war, and Corby's distilleries are devoted to production of war materials. Supplies of Corby's are being measured out carefully. We suggest you buy a "sample" pint of the light, sociable whiskey with the grand old Canadian name. Even occasional "sampling" of Corby's now may grow to lasting preference after victory.



Now I'm on every Corby's bottle asking you to **BUY WAR BONDS**



WAFS

Women's Auxiliary Ferrying Squadron

Theirs is the man-sized job of ferrying war planes from factories to air-bases for Uncle Sam. Expert flyers, each and every one . . . **THEY ARE THE BEST.**

With us

IT'S CHESTERFIELD

**GOOD TOBACCO, YES . . . THE RIGHT COMBINATION
OF THE WORLD'S BEST CIGARETTE TOBACCOS**

It is not enough to buy the best cigarette tobacco, it's Chesterfield's right combination, or blend, of these tobaccos that makes them so much milder, cooler and definitely better-tasting.

Good Tobacco, yes . . . but the Blend —
the Right Combination — that's the thing.



**SMOKE CHESTERFIELDS AND FIND OUT
HOW REALLY GOOD A CIGARETTE CAN BE**